

Algerian authorities, opposition resume reconciliation talks

ALGIERS (AFP) — New negotiations between Algeria's military-backed government and the opposition opened here on Monday amid hopes that Muslim fundamentalist leaders would join the talks aimed at ending radical Islamic insurgency.

The talks, chaired by President Liamine Zeroul, bring government representatives together with five moderate opposition groups who recently demanded that the banned Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) be allowed to take part.

They follow a series of meetings between the authorities and FIS leaders, including talks last Tuesday between General Mohammed Betchine, a senior aide to Mr. Zeroul, and the president's vice-president of the outlawed front, Abassi Madani and Ali Belhadj, in their military prison in Blida, according to informed sources.

Senior members of the FIS demanded on Sunday that the ban on their movement be lifted and their jailed colleagues freed if their movement is to join peace negotiations.

The talks in Blida focussed on a possible ceasefire between the security forces and armed fundamentalists after two-and-a-half years of insurgency which has claimed more than 3,000 lives. Press reports said Mr. Madani has offered a conditional "truce".

But armed FIS supporters are at odds with the most hardline extremist movement, the Armed Islamic Group (GIA), which refuses to negotiate and has targeted foreigners, academics, teachers and schools as part of its campaign against the authorities.

The FIS was banned in March 1992, two months after the army intervened in January 1992 to bring about the cancellation of the second round of independent Alger-



Liamine Zeroul

ia's first free general election, which it was poised to win. State radio reported that the five parties to the talks gave the government a 14-point memorandum calling for "appeasement measures" such as the release of Islamic detainees and the raising of the state of emergency imposed in February 1992.

Three parties allied in a "democratic movement" are boycotting the talks, whose aim is to work out the conditions necessary for free elections after the transition period, which was originally due to last three years from Mr. Zeroul's appointment in January.

The Socialist Forces Front (FFS) of Hocine Ait Ahmed declared that no "new elements" had emerged to encourage it to the negotiating table, while the Rally for Culture and Democracy (RCD) party of Said Sadi and Ettahadi, the former communist party, are opposed to any dealings with fundamentalists and have said politics and religion should not be mixed up.

Efforts to secure a ceasefire have so far run up against vehement opposition from the GIA, which on Monday said high schools and universities should remain closed or risk attack and set conditions for opening other schools when the new academic year begins on Saturday.

A GIA tract said that tui-

tion could resume for children aged between six and 15 — provided that all women teachers and girls over the age of puberty wore the Islamic veil, that mixed classes are abolished, that girls receive no physical education and that all music teaching ceases.

Schoolgirls not wearing the veil have already been gunned down in the streets and teachers shot in front of their classes.

Some 400 primary and secondary schools have already been burned or bombed since June, but the government said several of them have been repaired to take pupils from Sept. 10. Higher Education Minister Boubakeur Benbouid has announced that 1,500 security personnel will be recruited to guard universities.

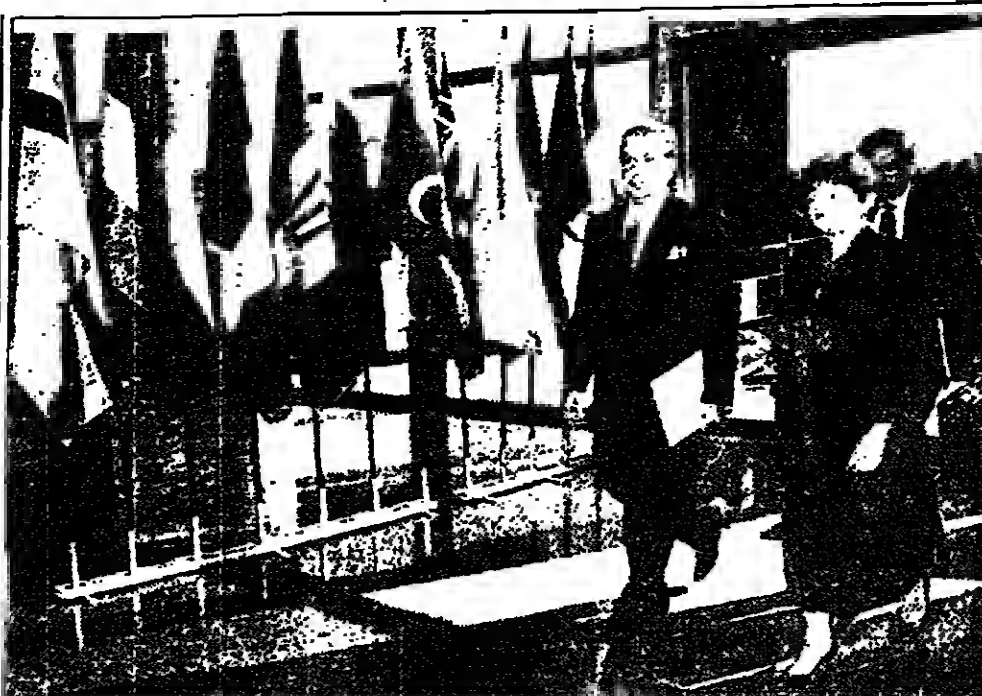
Taking part in the talks are the former sole ruling National Liberation Front (FLN), former President Ahmed Ben Bella's Movement for Democracy in Algeria (MDA), the Algerian Renewal Party (PRA) and two moderate Islamic parties.

French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe said that attempts to bring about political dialogue in Algeria were going "in the right direction" even if some parties "still refuse to take part".

In an interview published by Monday's edition of the daily Le Monde, Mr. Juppe added that "one may hope, in view notably of certain rifts in the Muslim front, that one day these attempts will lead to something".

He was apparently referring to Muslims putting pressure on the radicals to lay down their arms and negotiate with the authorities.

Mr. Juppe said that it was up to "the Algerian authorities to say within what limits and with whom dialogue can be conducted and up to the different Algerian political forces to set their terms for participation."



Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland arrives at the International Conference on Population and Development Monday in Cairo, where 3,500 delegates from 182 countries are to discuss a 20-year action plan to slow population growth and development in Third World countries (see story page 1) (AFP photo)

Rabbani hopes for peace talks, but says no to ex-communists

KABUL (AFP) — President Burhanuddin Rabbani's administration hopes to negotiate a settlement to Afghanistan's years-long conflict but remains adamant that ex-communist factions be excluded from any talks, an official spokesman said Monday.

Recent peace talks in Islamabad sponsored by U.N. special envoy Mahmud Mestiri foundered, because Mr. Rabbani refused to send representatives to meet with an opposition delegation that included one-time communists loyal to Uzbek militia boss General Abdul Rashid Dostam.

"We don't think Mahmud Mestiri received a sound consultation about the inclusion of Dostam in the peace negotiations," said Mr. Rabbani's press spokesman Abdul Aziz Morad.

"With the exception of one or two factions, no Afghan leader has announced a willingness to talk with Dostam," Mr. Morad said.

Mr. Morad charged that Hezb-i-Islami faction leader Gulbuddin Hekmatyar — a military ally of Gen. Dostam — was responsible for the failure of the latest United Nations initiative by insisting on the inclusion of the Uzbek leader.

Mr. Morad expressed the Kabul administration's support for U.N. participation in trying to solve the Afghan crisis, but repeated that peace talks should not be held outside the country.

He said he backed a plan for the Loya Jirga, or national gathering of peoples' representatives, to meet next month in order to settle the dispute over the country's

leadership. Mr. Morad also said the state was working on a new peace proposal to present to the United Nations.

Meanwhile, fighting continued for the third consecutive day south of Kabul near Pul-i-Alam, capital of Logar province, where Hezb-i-Islami fighters are attempting to dislodge Mr. Rabbani's Jamiat-i-Islami faction.

Fighting has raged since a coalition of Muslim forces ousted the country's communist government, but then broke up into a kaleidoscope of factions attempting to seize power.

A heavy mid-afternoon rocket bombardment broke the relative calm of the capital Monday, but it was not immediately clear if any side had started an infantry offensive.

Islamic Jihad claim killing of Israeli soldier

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — The Islamic Jihad group said in a leader on Monday that its guerrillas killed an Israeli soldier in the Gaza Strip as part of a "holy struggle to liberate Palestine".

Gunmen in a moving car killed the soldier and wounded two in the strip on Sunday near Jewish settlements where Israelis still patrol under a May accord handing over most of Gaza to Palestinian rule.

On Sunday, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's special adviser on terrorism warned Israelis that guerrillas could strike at home or abroad to mark the Jewish New Year holiday that started Monday

night.

"The holy struggle of our forces against the infidel Zionist regime is the only way to achieve the reality of our struggle and our blood and martyrdom on the land of Palestine from the enemy."

The group, an Israeli-Palestinian peace ally, said it was safe to base.

Israel urges Palestinian to counter Islamists

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin on Monday issued his sternest warning yet to the Palestinians to tackle terrorism or risk derailing the peace process.

"I am beginning to feel that they (the Palestinian Authority) are going too far," he told state radio after the murder of an Israeli army corporal and wounding of two other soldiers in a Gaza Strip ambush.

"I will not say any more," he added ominously in a Jewish New Year address on state radio.

"I am not in the habit of making threats, but we insist, if the authority does not change its way of dealing with terrorism... it will be very hard to go on."

Mr. Rabin explained he was not "talking about a total halt" to terror.

"We are still demanding that the Palestinian Authority takes action against the terrorist movements, namely Hamas and Islamic Jihad, who openly call for the pursuit of terrorism against Israelis with the avowed intention of damaging or bal-

ancing the peace process of the Palestinians." He recalled Israel's tradition of asking for Islamic fundamentalists who took refuge in self-rule Gaza Strip the murder of two Israeli soldiers, near Tel Aviv, Aug. 26.

"We have had no more to our request concerning two men who carried out an attack in Ramla. I cannot say they have done something about this. We have to the Palestinians to fulfill commitments," Mr. Rabin said.

The fundamentalist Islamic Jihad claimed responsibility for killing an Israeli corporal late Sunday wounding two other soldiers in an ambush which left Palestinians hurt.

Israeli chief of staff Lt. General Elad Barak also urged the Palestinian act.

"Israel expects the Palestinian leadership and political figures to fulfill their part in guaranteeing Israeli security so we can move forward the peace process," he said on the radio.

By William MacLean
Reuter

KUWAIT — Kuwait, demanding former occupier Iraq recognise it as a sovereign state, has launched a fresh diplomatic offensive to counter an energetic campaign by Baghdad for the lifting of crippling Gulf war sanctions.

The tiny oil-exporter has sent envoys to tell the world its large neighbour has yet to recognise the state it occupied in 1990-91 or free hundreds of Kuwaitis it allegedly holds.

"A Muslim should never be bitten twice from the same den," Information Minister Sheikh Saud Al Sabah was quoted as saying by the London-based Al Wasat magazine. "We were stung so many times we should remain vigilant."

Diplomats from both countries have moved into top gear ahead of a U.N. Security Council regular 60-day review in mid-September of Iraqi compliance with the curbs preventing the resumption of vital oil exports and normal trade.

Iraq last month stepped up efforts to end the four years of economic and political isolation which followed the August 1990 invasion and subsequent

Kuwait counters Iraqi campaign on sanctions

U.S.-led campaign to liberate Kuwait. It sent officials to lobby Russia, France, Pakistan, Indonesia and Morocco among other states.

Kuwaiti foreign ministry undersecretary Suleiman Al Shaheen this week starts a tour of Egypt, China and Security Council president New Zealand with messages from Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad Al Sabah.

"Wherever the Iraqis go we will follow," said a Kuwaiti official. "You will see us turning up when they have left, to explain the justice of our policy."

Sheikh Salem Al Sabah, who heads a search for Kuwait's Gulf war missing, will attend a meeting in Geneva on Tuesday of a multinational committee overseeing the release of prisoners.

Kuwait says Iraq still holds 600 Kuwaitis and

third country nationals including Saudis, Iranians, Egyptians, Syrians, Indians and Lebanese detained during the occupation.

Iraq has long denied it holds any Kuwaitis. But on July 1 in a meeting of the committee Iraqi officials promised to probe the missing Kuwaitis' fate and they may make a statement on the subject at Tuesday's meeting.

Iraq has refused to recognise the border or give explicit and authoritative recognition of Kuwaiti sovereignty. But it has hinted it may issue a statement on those questions ahead of the mid-September review.

Kuwait insists any recognition made by a top Iraqi official and published in the Iraqi government gazette. Iraq should also submit the statement to the U.N. Security Council as a

permanent U.N. document, Kuwaiti officials say. Kuwait says even if Iraq meets all international demands, it will never be trustworthy and points as an example to passages in Iraqi school books describing Kuwait as Iraqi land.

Baghdad has made progress complying with Gulf war resolutions that called for it to scrap its weapons of mass destruction and for long-term monitoring to ensure it does not reacquire forbidden arms.

But most council members insist that before sanctions can be lifted, Baghdad must also unequivocally recognise the sovereignty of Kuwait and its U.N.-demarcated borders.

There is virtually no chance of an easing of sanctions at the September review, but some council members might want to issue statement commending Baghdad for complying with some resolutions.

There is speculation that the council might go further and say that arrangements for long term monitoring of Iraqi facilities with a military potential were in place and that a trial period lasting six months or possibly longer could begin.

Yemen's last Jews torn between staying home or emigrating

By Katherine Roth
Agence France Presse

SAADA, Yemen — Yemen's dwindling group of Jews is torn between staying in their Islamic homeland or accepting offers to emigrate to Israel or elsewhere.

Nowhere is their dilemma more evident than in Saada, a mountain town near the border with Saudi Arabia where a once-thriving Jewish community has shrunk to several dozen people.

Jews here say they now number fewer than 300 in the whole of Yemen, though authorities put the figure at 2,000. The few who remain live mostly in the north but say the pressure to leave is strong.

In early August, Israel said negotiations were underway with Yemen to allow the last few Jews to leave.

More than 60,000 have gone to Israel since its creation in 1948.

"We still have enough people for the minimum of ten necessary to perform Saturday services, but that might not be true for long,"

lamented Moshe Khobani, one of Saada's two rabbis. There is no local synagogue in Saada, 245 kilometres north of Sanaa, and the only Hebrew school here was forced to close because there were not enough Jewish students to attend.

Most Yemeni Jews are taught Hebrew and other subjects at home by their parents and religious traditions are passed down from generation to generation.

At first glance, nothing separates Mr. Khobani from other Yemenis. Yemeni Jews dress as Muslims except they don't have the right to wear the lamia, a curved dagger.

Few wear Jewish headgear, preferring the quipped headscarves that resemble the Arab kuffiyeh.

Yemeni Jews are known for their skilled silver work, but as the community disappears so do the arts for which it has long been famous.

Six years ago there were more than 100 Jewish silver craftsmen in Saada. Today Mr. Khobani is one of fewer than 20 remaining silversmiths here.

"Many families are leaving and that makes it hard on the few of us who remain. If everyone else leaves we'll finally be obliged to go too," Mr. Khobani said as he crafted silver pieces in his workshop.

Yemeni Jews say they are offered money, education and job opportunities from international Jewish organisations vying for their attention if they agree to go abroad.

Yousef Soleiman Habib, another Jew from Saada, said four families went to the United States recently under the sponsorship of a New York-based Jewish group with close ties to the Israeli government.

Members of the U.S. group staying at a small hotel in Sanaa refused to comment on their mission or give the official name of their organisation.

Some 32 other Yemeni Jews, mainly youths, left the country with the help of an Ashkenazi, or central European, Jewish organisation that is also based in New York.

"I spent a month in New

York eight months ago on the invitation of the nazis," said Mr. Habib whose grandparents to Israel three years ago.

"But my home is here and I'm staying in Yemen," Yousef Zarch, 40, said too would remain on though many of his relatives had emigrated. "I'm Yemeni. Where do you want to go? I have never been south of Sanaa," said.

Because the Jewish community has become so small, some members have converted to Islam in order to marry. One of Mr. Habib's sisters has married a Muslim tribesman.

His other sister would not be able to find a Jewish girl to marry if the family remains in Yemen.

Remaining Jews also counter difficulties communicating with relatives in the United States and especially Israel.

The Yemeni government has said Jews are free to leave or stay. "They are Yemenis like any other Yemenis," insisted Saada governor Ali Al Qaisi.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO
17:00 Alice Au Pays De Merveilles
17:30 Eureka J'ai Tous Faux
18:30 News in French
18:45 Grand Galop
19:00 News in Hebrew
19:30 News in Arabic
20:00 Innovation
21:10 Hollywood Stuntmakers
21:30 The Commish
22:00 News in English
22:20 Come in Spinner

PRAYER TIMES

06:49 Fajr
06:59 Sunrise
12:34 Dhuhr
16:09 Asr
19:01 Maghrib
20:20 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Sweteb, Tel. 810740
Assembly of God Church, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terrence Church Tel. 623666
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541

Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751

Armenian International Church Tel. 625226

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 624328

German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 684195

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654922

Church of Nazareth Tel. 675591

The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 812295

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.
Normal summer weather conditions will prevail with winds north-westerly moderate. In Amman, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.
Min./Max. temp.
Amman 17/31
Aqaba 17/38
Desert 15/35
Jordan Valley 23/37
Yesterday's high temperatures:
Amman 30, Aqaba 36, Humidity readings: Amman 35 per cent, Aqaba 21 per cent.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Nassir Ibrahim 662935
Dr. Yousef Rashid 896301
Dr. Fayez Dabbas 799135
Dr. Jumal Tariq 794710
Firas pharmacy 661912
Ferdous pharmacy 778336
Al Asema pharmacy 637055
Nakoukhi pharmacy 623672
Al Salam pharmacy 636780
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shamsani pharmacy 637660
Najib pharmacy 623672
Najib pharmacy 847632

IRBID:
Dr. Mohammad Al Hila 279773
Aljuda pharmacy (—)

ZARQA:
Dr. Walid Halahab 982799
Khalifah pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111

Civil Defence Immediate

Rescue 636241
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 617101
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 630821
Hotel Complaints 609600
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (Director's assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone 623101
Repairs 09186732
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615

Electric Power Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 08-57320
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-57320

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn 644281/6

Akileh Maternity, J. Amn. 64441/2

Jabal Amman Maternity 642652
Malhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shamsani 664171/4
Shamsani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
The Islamic, Abdali 666177/73
Al-Ahli, Abdali 6641646
Italian, Al-Mahajra 77101/3
Al-Bashir, J. Ashraf 77511/26
Army, Marks 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 686100
Ansal Hospital 641555
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital 09188333
Zarqa National Hospital 09188672
Ibn Sina Hospital 09188672
Al Hikma Modern Hospital 09189090
DBUD:
Princess Basma Hospital 02127555
Greek Catholic Hospital 02127275
Ben Al Nahas Hospital 021247100
AQABA:
Princess Hays Hospital 03134111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by

Royal Jordanian (RJ) information

Department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

04:10 Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)
04:30 Damascus (RJ)
04:30 Dhahran (RJ)
04:30 Abu Dhabi (RJ)
04:30 Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
04:30 Larnaca (RJ)
04:30 Jeddah (RJ)
04:30 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
04:30 Kuala Lumpur, Singapore (RJ)
04:30 Beirut (add) (ME)
04:30 Larnaca, Rome (AZ)
04:30 Cairo (MS)
04:30 Vienna (OS)
04:30 Abu Dhabi, Al Ain (GF)
04:30 Riyadh (SV)
04:30 Damascus (AZ)
04:30 Kiev (AU)
04:30 Aden (DY)
04:30 Rome (AZ)
04:30 Paris, Beirut (AF)
04:30 Kiev (GU)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

04:30 Vienna (OS)
04:30 Cairo (MS)
04:30 Riyadh (SV)
04:30 Damascus (AZ)
04:30 Kiev (AU)
04:30 Aden (DY)
04:30 Rome (AZ)
04:30 Paris, Beirut (AF)
04:30 Kiev (GU)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

06:00 Amman (RJ)
06:30 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
06:30 Vienna, Frankfurt (RJ)
06:30 Montreal, Toronto (RJ)
06:30 Paris (RJ)
06:30 Geneva, Brussels (RJ)
06:30 Cairo (RJ)
06:30 London (RJ)
06:30 Madrid (RJ)
06:30 Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
06:30 Larnaca (RJ)
06:30 Jeddah (RJ)
06:30 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
06:30 Kuala Lumpur, Singapore (RJ)
06:30 Beirut (add) (ME)
06:30 Larnaca, Rome (AZ)
06:30 Cairo (MS)
06:30 Vienna (OS)
06:30 Abu Dhabi, Al Ain (GF)
06:30 Riyadh (SV)
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06:30 Vienna (OS)
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06:30 Riyadh (SV)
06:30 Damascus (AZ)
06:30 Kiev (AU)
06:30 Aden (DY)
06:30 Rome (AZ)
06:30 Paris, Beirut (AF)
06:30 Kiev (GU)

HIJAZ RAILWAY TRAIN

Dep. Amman 8:00 a.m. every Monday
Arr. Damascus 5:00 p.m. every Monday
Dep. Damascus 7:30 a.m. every Monday
Arr. Amman 5:00 p.m. every Monday

MARKET PRICES

Uppertower price in Jds per kg

Apple 600/400
Banana 300/200
Banana (Mukammal) 110/100
Cabbage 200/150
Carrot 100/80
Cauliflower 200/150
Cucumbers (large) 200/150
Cucumbers (small) 200/150
Eggplant 200/150
Garlic 200/150
Grapes (Hawam) 600/500
Guava 200/150
Lemon 200/150
Marrow (large) 200/150
Marrow (small) 200/150
Mulubiyah 200/150
Onion (dry) 200/150
Onion (wet) 200/150
Pepper (hot) 200/150
Pepper (sweet) 200/150
Potato 200/150
Peaches 200/150
Pomegranate 200/150
Tomato 200/150
Tasting bean 200/150
Watermelon

Gore: Haiti leaders will leave 'one way or another'

WASHINGTON (R) — Vice President Al Gore said Sunday that Haiti's military leaders will have to leave "one way or another."

Mr. Gore said that "the world community is outraged, the United States is outraged" at what he called Haiti's "illegal dictators" of military rulers and their

abuses of power. Asked on NBC Television's "meet the press" if a U.S. invasion of Haiti was inevitable, Mr. Gore replied, "it is not inevitable if the illegal dictators in Haiti decide to comply with the world community's wishes and demands embodied in the United Nations Resolution 940

and leave of their own accord. "We have made it clear that the regime there is going to leave one way or another," Mr. Gore said.

But he gave no inkling as to when and if the United States would set a deadline for any invasion if Haiti's military leadership, headed

by Lieutenant General Raoul Cedras, continued to defy U.S. demands that they cede power to exiled President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott said last week that options other than invasion have nearly been exhausted and U.S. military officials have talked openly about preparations for an invasion.

Haiti's 7,000-member military force, which has fewer than a dozen armoured personnel carriers and only light weapons, is ill-equipped to defend against an American invasion force.

On Saturday, Representative Lee Hamilton said the United States was close to military intervention in Haiti, "unless we can have a dramatic diplomatic initiative... or perhaps some opening that might come through some of the secret activities that are going on."

"I can't be specific about that, but there are some activities," Mr. Hamilton, the chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, said on CNN's "Newsmaker Saturday" programme, declining to say what they were.



Women panhandle outside a local church in downtown Port-au-Prince. The ongoing economic embargo against Haiti has had the most effects on the country's poor according to local church authorities (AFP photo)

Diplomats in Port-au-Prince said they knew of no specific secret initiative but added there were signs of a rift among Haiti's military leaders.

Some said that although Gen. Cedras and Brigadier-General Philippe Biamby showed no indication they would discuss stepping down, the third of the trio Washington has pledged to remove, Colonel Joseph Michel Francois, was seen as more willing

to negotiate. Gen. Cedras, who refused to speak to reporters Sunday after attending mass with his wife, has been keeping a low profile.

Mr. Hamilton, as well as many other members of Congress, have expressed reservations about how long a U.S. force would have to remain in Haiti and about Mr. Aristide's leadership ability.

"I think most members of Congress are highly sceptical of intervention. I do believe, however, that if a president decides to intervene, makes the case for it, and the American military forces are on the island, Congress will accept it," Mr. Hamilton said.

Senate Republican leader Bob Dole said this week he was opposed to an invasion unless President Bill Clinton could convince him that it was in the U.S. national interest.



Haitian military leader Raoul Cedras (left) and his wife Jannick Prosper (centre) enter a church in Port-au-Prince Haiti (AFP photo)

Australia's Evans calls for U.N. military force

SYDNEY (R) — Australian aid officials Monday supported calls for Foreign Minister Gareth Evans for a permanent U.N. military force paid for from existing national defence budgets or an international tax or levy.

Care Australia, involved in Rwanda, Somalia and Cambodia, Monday called for more coordinated U.N. military involvement in aid missions.

"Somalia proved how successful a joint relief effort can be during times of large-scale disaster... and we all hope that future emergencies will comprise an even more effective and coordinated military response," said National Director Ian Harris.

Community Aid Abroad (CAA) also backed Mr. Evans' plan.

"We support the plan strongly, with the caveat that there are well-trained, well-coordinated troops," Executive Director Jeremy Hobbs said.

Mr. Hobbs said the thousands of deaths in the Rwandan-Zaire border refugee camps could have been avoided had the United Nations mobilised a force more quickly and prevented the mass exodus from Rwanda.

In the latest edition of the U.S. magazine Foreign Policy, published Sunday, Mr. Evans described the U.N.'s peacekeeping system as makeshift, under-trained, ill-equipped and slow.

"Although the idea of the U.N. standing force has in the past been ruled out as unrealistic, including by me, the U.N.'s recent impotence in the face of genocide gives cause for reconsideration," Mr. Evans said.

Mr. Evans said a standing force could be paid for by a contribution of five per cent of defence budgets by all U.N. members, resulting in a U.N. security budget of \$40 billion, 10 times the body's current peacekeeping budget.

Alternatively, financing could come from a levy on international air travel — a flat \$10 per passenger levy would yield \$3 billion — or a turnover tax on foreign-exchange transactions of about 0.1 per cent.

"Cost will be the key reason, though not the only one, for member states resisting the creation of a rapid reaction force of any size," Mr. Evans wrote.

Mr. Evans said a U.N. military force must be complemented with preventive diplomacy and called for the creation of six regional U.N. preventive diplomacy units, staffed by senior U.N. officers familiar with their regional issues.

The foreign minister also called for an administrative reorganisation of the United Nations involving the creation of four deputy secretaries general, one responsible for peace-building and humanitarian affairs, to make management more efficient.

Bloody battle looms in French presidential poll

PARIS (AFP) — A bloody battle loomed Monday within France's ruling right-wing coalition after Gaullist leader Jacques Chirac threw his hat in the ring for next year's presidential poll in a bid to gain the upper hand from Prime Minister Edouard Balladur.

Mr. Balladur, so far an undeclared candidate for the top job, faced a split within his government as ministers stated their preferences, opening up the prospects for two Gaullist candidates in the presidential election next April and May.

Mr. Chirac, president of the Rally For the Republic (RPR) Party, opened fire at the weekend as Mr. Balladur continued to fly high in opinion polls, with one survey crediting the prime minister with a popularity rating of 60 per cent.

Another poll said that if American-style primary elections were held to pick a conservative candidate, Mr. Balladur would win with 44 per cent of the vote, compared with 31 per cent for Chirac.

Mr. Balladur's persistent high standing in the polls forced Mr. Chirac to react or eclipse.

Addressing a seminar of the RPR youth wing in Bordeaux over the weekend, the Gaullist leader made it abundantly clear he will stand for election, even though he stopped short of a formal declaration of candidacy.

To cries of "Chirac for president," he made a thinly veiled attack on Mr. Balladur, his former protégé within the RPR, accusing him of betrayal and ingratitude.

Mr. Chirac recalled the "pact" between himself and Mr. Balladur after the right's landslide legislative victory over the Socialists in March 1993. Under the pact, the premiership was for Mr. Balladur, while Mr. Chirac was to devote himself to his presidential campaign.

"It is human nature for ambitions to come out into the open," Mr. Chirac said, "but at the end of the road, unity must prevail, for the interest of France demands it, and this is no empty word for Gaullists."

Far from encouraging uni-

ty, 61-year-old Chirac opened up a split within the governing coalition, and presented Mr. Balladur with a scenario he has been trying to avoid — a premature presidential campaign poisoning the remaining eight months of his government.

Foreign Minister Alain Juppe, who is RPR secretary-general, signalled the start of the battle Friday night by plumping openly for Mr. Chirac.

Mr. Juppe told the seminar: "If Jacques Chirac shows the way, you will be there — and I will be with you — to follow him."

Mr. Juppe at once reaffirmed his "loyalty" to the government, but the clear support for a Chirac candidacy by such a prominent member of the government could only embarrass the 64-year-old Balladur.

The remarks were a switch for Mr. Juppe, who only last month had said that the RPR would have to choose between the two rivals, implying for the first time that the party's candidate would not automatically be Mr. Chirac.

Opinion polls have shown that Mr. Chirac, already a loser in presidential elections in 1981 and 1988, could be defeated by Jacques Delors, 68, the outgoing European Commission president and a former moderate Socialist finance minister. Mr. Balladur on the other hand would easily defeat Mr. Delors, the polls show.

Mr. Delors has so far been reluctant to declare his candidacy, but appears the Socialists' best hope.

The RPR is the biggest party in the ruling right-wing coalition. Big guns in its junior partner, the Union for French Democracy (UDF), were prompted by Mr. Chirac's broadside to restate their support for a Balladur candidacy.

Industry Minister Gerard Longuet came out for a "unity candidate" — meaning Mr. Balladur — and criticised Mr. Chirac's stance as premature, while Defence Minister Francois Leotard attacked those openly calling for a Chirac candidacy as "snipers" who were undermining the coalition government.

Cambodia coup plotter escapes from custody

PHNOM PENH (R) — One of the main organisers of a failed coup attempt in Cambodia in July has escaped from military detention, a senior police commander said Monday.

General Sin Song, a former interior minister in the old Vietnamese-installed government, escaped early Sunday morning, the police commander said, asking not to be named.

"He escaped from the detention house Sunday morning between 3 and 4 a.m. we are in the process of tracking him down," the commander said.

Gen. Sin Song was originally placed under house arrest on July 3 while his alleged co-conspirator, Prince Norodom Chakrapong, was ordered to leave

Cambodia. Gen. Sin Song was later placed under custody of the Defence Ministry and was supervised by military police at the time of his escape, the police source told Reuters.

Prince Chakrapong, a former deputy prime minister and a son of King Norodom Sihanouk, first landed in Malaysia before travelling on to Thailand.

Last Tuesday he arrived in France and boarded a domestic flight to the southern town of Montpellier. He has a French residency permit dating back to the 1970s.

Gen. Sin Song, Prince Chakrapong and another alleged plotter, General Sin Sen, were all members of the Cambodian People's Party (CPP), the political wing of the former regime.

Malaysia detains Al Arqam leader's wife, aide

KUALA LUMPUR (AFP) — Malaysian police said Monday one of the wives and a senior aide of Al Arqam leader Ashaari Mohammad would be detained under state security laws.

Hatijah Aam, one of Mr. Ashaari's four wives, and a senior aide, Soid Sulaiman, are to join the sect leader in detention under Malaysia's Internal Security Act (ISA), which allows imprisonment without trial, the nation's Deputy Police Chief Samsuri Arshad said.

Three other aides of the detained 57-year-old Muslim leader were held under the Societies Act, under which they could be fined or jailed. "Hatijah's six-month-old baby will be allowed to stay with her as she is being breast-fed," a police spokesman said.

Sect followers said they had no plans for a militant response to the action.

The detentions signal the government's deepening of a clampdown launched last month when Malaysia outlawed the sect's activities, ruling that Al Arqam propagated deviationist teachings.

Mr. Samsuri said the ISA arrests were made to pave the way for further investigations because police believe they were adequate for detaining the sect leaders indefinitely.

VIENNA (AFP) — Nuclear power plants would garner wider public acceptance only through continued demonstration of their safety and reliability, the head of the world's nuclear watchdog said Monday.

"The wider acceptance of the nuclear option can only be expected from continued demonstration of its safety, reliability and environmental advantages," said Hans Blix, head of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), during a speech opening a conference on nuclear power.

The four-day conference, attended by delegates from 37 countries and five international organisations, is being held in conjunction with the 40th anniversary of the opening of the first nuclear power plant in Obninsk, Russia, in 1954.

There are currently 430 nuclear power plants operating in 30 countries and producing 17 per cent of the world's electrical energy.

Mr. Blix told the delegates that it was regrettable that atomic weapons and the illegal traffic of nuclear material had tended to undermine the usefulness of nuclear power plants.

"It is regrettable that the issues which now dominate the media tend to create an atmosphere in which it is difficult to have a balanced public discussion for the nuclear power option," Mr. Blix said.

Meanwhile, forty years af-

Greek MPs to vote on Mitsotakis trial

ATHENS (R) — A Greek investigating committee asked parliament Monday to bring criminal charges against former Prime Minister Constantine Mitsotakis over allegations that he accepted bribes in the 1992 sale of a state cement firm.

Officials said the parliamentary committee handed Aristide Mitsotakis a petition asking that Mr. Mitsotakis and two of his former ministers be tried by a special 13-judge criminal court.

Mr. Karamanlis must now set a date within the next month for a debate and vote on whether to lift the immunity of Mr. Mitsotakis, conservative prime minister from 1990 to 1993, and send him for trial.

The 300-seat parliament, where the ruling Socialists have a clear absolute majority, has already voted in a separate case to try Mr. Mitsotakis on charges of illegal wiretapping.

Mr. Mitsotakis is accused of accepting \$22.5 million in bribes in the sale of the state-run Heracles Cement Company to Italy's Calcestruzzi Cement and Greece's National Bank for \$225 million.

He gained international attention as an innovative reformer while governor of Ceara, a poor northeastern state.

Mr. Franco "wants a guarantee of continuity in the plan's essentials, a plan in which I also believe," Mr. Gomes said in a CBN interview.

Analysts said the gaffe had given new hope to leftist Luiz Inacio "Lula" Da Silva of the Workers Party (PT), trailing Mr. Cardoso by 22 points in polls ahead of the Oct. 3 elections. He now could force Mr. Cardoso into a second-round run-off in November.

"This has been a quiet campaign up to now. It has been a one-subject campaign," a Latin American diplomat said, referring to the economic plan.

"This now gives Cardoso's opponents something to bash him with."

A caravan of born-honking, flag-waving PT supporters demonstrated before the ministry minutes after Mr. Ricupero's announcement to celebrate his resignation.

"Cry, little Fernando, because your time has come,"

Mr. Gomes is a star in Mr. Cardoso's Brazilian Social Democratic Party (PSDB).

ter the world's first nuclear power station came on stream in the Soviet Union, the Russian nuclear industry is battling for its future amid mounting Western pressure.

Russian officials are convinced that Western concerns over security at Russian nuclear power industry.

That, and the parlous state of the Russian economy, are posing a real threat to the development of the industry, Russian experts say.

"The worst thing is that we are losing our scientific potential," one expert said.

"If things don't improve quickly, within five years we'll be reduced to buying everything from the Americans."

Despite the catastrophic nuclear leak at Chernobyl in Ukraine in April 1986, officials are very proud of what the industry has achieved.

"Our nuclear power stations are three times cheaper, and in many cases more efficient than their Western equivalents," the expert said.

Western scientists have also expressed doubts about the credibility of Russia's nuclear safety inspectorate, GosAtomNadzor, to which each power station must apply for a licence every year.

GosAtomNadzor reports directly to the Russian president, and its inspectors are in theory independent of the Atomic Energy Ministry.

But in reality they get paid less than the operators in the power stations. One Western expert said that at least one nuclear power station was in the habit of paying GosAtomNadzor inspectors, undermining their independence.

The Russians deny that such payments are made, but they do admit that the industry is facing a general funding crisis.

Nearly all development projects have been frozen for lack of funds. A symptom of the economic crisis is that many major clients, factories and towns, fail to pay their electricity bills.

The overall debt to electricity producers was recently estimated at \$1 billion. The power stations, in turn, often pay their own employees months late.

Nuclear installations themselves are ageing — around 20 per cent of the reactors in Russia date back to the early 1970s — and construction work on their replacements has not started. Replacement institutes too are feeling the pinch.

So far Russia is managing to meet the demand for electricity. In spite of the country's economic dislocation, Russia's nine nuclear power stations last year kept output at the level of previous years, generating 120 billion kilowatt hours to supply 12 per cent of the country's electricity needs.

Last year 29 accidents were logged, all of them at Level One, the lowest on the international scale of incidents at nuclear power stations, and none of them involved any leak of radioactivity.

But the ghost of Chernobyl continues to haunt the industry. In Ukraine, four nuclear reactors beside Chernobyl are not generating enough to make up the shortfall in the country's electricity requirements.

Mindful of Western anxiety, and hopeful of securing a much-needed cash windfall, Kiev has constantly upped its estimates of the cost of closing the Chernobyl plant for good.

PHNOM PENH (AFP) — City authorities are under fire for shutting down Phnom Penh's notorious Toul Kork brothel district, and critics say the closure will promote the spread of disease and the loss of income for locals.

Health workers said they were upset about the crackdown, and have warned that the brothel ban will push sex workers underground, and complicate the prevention and control of the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). But while the government argued about the best way to prevent the spread of sexually transmitted diseases, other Toul Kork residents had more immediate concerns.

"I used to make \$150 a month from hiring my house to the prostitutes, but now I get nothing," said a disappointed Noh Kim, 39, Chan Sok, 54, who used to pay her rent by selling anti-venereal disease creams and condoms to the male clients and prostitutes in Toul Kork said: "Now I won't be able to sell even a single condom." "I don't know how to get money to feed my children now," she said.

Ok Vongvathany, a doctor at a clinic in the once-thriving red light district, said the closure "is good for the government but it is not good for us to control the possible spread of AIDS." She said that prostitutes would stop coming to the clinic for check-ups for sexually transmitted diseases — particularly HIV, the precursor to acquire immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) — for fear of police harassment.

Bill Wyman's wife gives birth to a daughter

LONDON (AP) — Suzanne Wyman, wife of former Rolling Stone Bill Wyman, gave birth Sunday to their first child, a daughter, Katharine Noelle, weighing 6 lbs. 13 oz. (3.09 kilograms). Wyman, 57, who was a bass player with the rock group until last year, has a 31-year-old son from a previous marriage. He married the former Suzanne Accosta, 34, an American fashion designer, in France in April 1993.

Florida grave may tell if Napoleon was murdered

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Remains in a Florida grave may unravel an imperial mystery, say students of Napoleon bent on discovering if the tricolored Corsican might have been murdered. "We're thinking about trying to exhumate the body of Napoleon's nephew" who is buried in Tallahassee, said Napoleonic Society of America (NSA) spokesman Bob Snibbe. It's come down to a battle for bones and bits of hair, and awaiting potentially telling results from the laboratories of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Mr. Snibbe said, sounding convinced the society is getting closer to the truth. The famed French emperor died in 1821 on the windswept South Atlantic island of Saint Helena, but just how he died has kept students of his life bunting for clues for more than a century. Two separate hair samples reportedly from the Little Corporal himself are being tested by the FBI to determine whether the person or persons from whom they were snipped died of arsenic poisoning. But "whether it was really Napoleon's hair, nobody really knows," Mr. Snibbe acknowledged. Still, he said, "the (atomic absorption) tests will reveal how much arsenic is in the hair, if any" — though without confirming precisely whose hair was tested. The arsenic test results are to be unveiled at the NSA annual conference in Chicago next week.

Blangladesh to export crocodiles

DHAKA (AFP) — Commerce Minister M. Shamsul Islam said Bangladesh would export crocodiles to boost its non-traditional exports sector, newspapers here reported Monday. The minister told parliament Sunday that foreign demand for crocodiles was strong and that they would be taken from the Sundarban mangrove forest area. He did not say what the crocodiles would be used for or in what form they would be exported. Bangladesh's existing non-traditional exports include cane furniture and handicrafts.

Closure of Phnom Penh brothel district criticised

PHNOM PENH (AFP) — City authorities are under fire for shutting down Phnom Penh's notorious Toul Kork brothel district, and critics say the closure will promote the spread of disease and the loss of income for locals. Health workers said they were upset about the crackdown, and have warned that the brothel ban will push sex workers underground, and complicate the prevention and control of the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). But while the government argued about the best way to prevent the spread of sexually transmitted diseases, other Toul Kork residents had more immediate concerns. "I used to make \$150 a month from hiring my house to the prostitutes, but now I get nothing," said a disappointed Noh Kim, 39, Chan Sok, 54, who used to pay her rent by selling anti-venereal disease creams and condoms to the male clients and prostitutes in Toul Kork said: "Now I won't be able to sell even a single condom." "I don't know how to get money to feed my children now," she said.

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Bill Wyman wife gives birth to a daughter

LONDON (AP) — Bill Wyman, wife of the late rock star, gave birth Sunday to a daughter, a 3.09 kilogram (6.81 pound) baby, in a London hospital. Wyman, 57, who played with the band The Who until last year, married Suzanne Aston, an American fashion designer, in France in April.

Florida grand jury tells if Naples was murdered

WASHINGTON (AP) — A grand jury in Naples, Fla., is expected to return a verdict on whether a man was murdered in a bar in the city last week. The man, a 31-year-old American, was found dead in a bar in Naples. The grand jury is expected to return a verdict on whether the man was murdered.

trial

absolute majority voted in a referendum to join the European Union. The referendum was held in a referendum to join the European Union.

is accused of \$22.5 million in the state of California. The case is being handled by the state of California.

gaffe

stars chanted, "Stabilize the world's ninth largest economy." The stars chanted, "Stabilize the world's ninth largest economy."

Bangladesh to export crocodiles

DHAKA (AP) — Bangladesh is planning to export crocodiles to the United States. The plan is to export crocodiles to the United States.

Closure of Phnom Penh brothel district critical

PHNOM PENH (AP) — The closure of a brothel district in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, is being criticized by some people. The closure is being criticized by some people.

wer

to elect a new president. The election is being held in a referendum to elect a new president.

Seoul opposition leader urges N. Korean detente

SEOUL (R) — The head of the South Korean opposition party Monday urged North Korea to seek detente. The head of the South Korean opposition party Monday urged North Korea to seek detente.

Nigerian oil strike fading as workers return

LAGOS (R) — More Nigerian oil workers returned to their jobs Monday as the strike faded. More Nigerian oil workers returned to their jobs Monday as the strike faded.



The scene outside the headquarters of Sinn Féin, the political wing of the IRA, on Falls Road in Belfast after a car bomb exploded late Sunday. No one was injured in the blast which came four days after the IRA declared an open-ended ceasefire (AFP photo)

Ireland seeks to quell U.K. doubts on ceasefire

BELFAST (R) — Irish Foreign Minister Dick Spring will seek to dispel British doubts about the permanence of an IRA ceasefire in talks Monday evening with Britain's Northern Ireland Secretary, Sir Patrick Mayhew.

The two men, key players in a nine-month-old Anglo-Irish peace process, met the day after the Protestant UUVF extremist group car-bombed the Belfast offices of the IRA's political wing, Sinn Féin, in what it said was an attack to promote democracy.

Mr. Spring and Sir Patrick will try to lay the groundwork for the next moves to end the 25-year-old sectarian and political conflict in Northern Ireland by discussing fresh all-party talks which Sinn Féin could join if the IRA ceasefire is for good.



Flames pour from a car bomb which exploded in front of the headquarters of the political wing of the IRA, Sinn Féin, in Falls Road, West Belfast (AFP photo)

Chechen opposition gather forces against Dudayev

MOSCOW (AFP) — Opposition groups in Chechnya appeared poised Monday to join forces in a concerted Moscow-backed military drive to topple President Dzhokhar Dudayev, the president of Russian separatist republic.

An alliance between former rival groups, the Provisional Council led by Omar Avturkhanov and forces loyal to warlord Ruslan Labazanov, was formed up as the former set 70 troops to join the latter's force fighting government troops at Argun, 15 kilometres (nine miles) south of the capital Grozny, reports indicated Monday.

Earlier former Russian parliamentary speaker Ruslan Khasbulatov said he was also ready to gather "several thousand volunteers" under the command of the council, which is openly backed by Moscow.

Fighting in the northern Caucasus republic has intensified since the council called Friday for the military overthrow of Mr. Dudayev's government.

The same day, clashes between Provisional Council forces and government troops killed up to 20 people. Up to nine more were killed Sunday in the clashes at Argun, government and council sources said.

The rapprochement between the opposition groups emerged after Mr. Avturkhanov met Sunday with Mr. Khasbulatov, one of the leaders of the October 1993 revolt against Boris Yeltsin and who returned to his native Chechnya at the beginning of August.

Troops loyal to Mr. Labazanov were forced to retreat from Argun after government troops moved in with tanks and heavy weapons, ITAR-TASS newsagency said.

Russian armed forces stationed in the regions neighbouring Chechnya have been put on top alert, Defence Minister Pavel Grachev told ITAR-TASS news agency Monday.

He said the "most serious measures" which included tight road and air travel controls, were aimed at preventing a conflict raging there from spreading outside Chechnya.

U.S., Cuba are far apart on legal visas for migrants

NEW YORK (R) — The United States and Cuba attempt again Monday to bridge differences on the mass exodus of Cuban boat people sailing towards Florida with U.S. officials warning against expectations of a quick accord.

After early optimism when the talks began Thursday, the third session ended with both sides far apart on a U.S. offer to increase legal immigration in exchange for Cuba halting the migration, now numbering over 30,000 this year.

At issue is a U.S. offer to issue immigration visas to more than 20,000 Cubans a year in return for Havana stopping the uncontrolled exodus. To date the United States has only allowed in about 2,700 people a year, while Cuba insists a 1982 agreement allowed for thousands more.

Cuba's chief delegate, Ricardo Alarcon, has maintained that the number of visas should be far higher than the United States had proposed, pointing to about 130,000 Cubans who have tried unsuccessfully to obtain legal entry.

He apparently told U.S. negotiators Sunday, including Michael Stoll, the deputy secretary of state, that Havana wanted at least 100,000 legal Cuban visas, according to the New York Times.

In comparison, more than 30,000 Cubans have tried to enter the United States illegally since the beginning of the year, most of them in August sailing rafts and rickety boats.

David Johnson, spokesman for the U.S. delegation would say only: "There are substantial gaps between us and I would caution against any premature speculation that an agreement will be reached."

"The differences are significant," he told reporters Sunday after the third round of negotiations at the U.S. mission to the United Nations.

But he again failed to give any explanation or answer questions after his regular briefings. Reversing earlier U.S. policies against Cubans who escaped by sea, President Bill Clinton last month said the new refugees could not come to the United States.

Instead, they are being taken to the U.S. naval base at Guantanamo on the Western tip of Cuba. He also threatened the embargo by forbidding remittances and travel by relatives.

Panama Sunday announced it would allow up to 10,000 Cuban refugees to be housed in U.S. controlled territory along the Panama Canal to relieve congestion at Guantanamo. The cost to the United States for six months will run to almost \$50 million, a U.S. military spokesman said.

The U.S. Coast Guard picked up 620 Cuban rafters at sea by late afternoon Sunday, petty officer Alex Worden said. Saturday's total was 946, down from earlier in the week but still high.

Twenty-two Cubans, all from the same family, slipped past the Coast Guard and landed their wooden boat at the Dry Tortugas National Park, a remote island about 70 miles (110 kilometres) west of Key West, Florida, in the Gulf of Mexico.

Park rangers said they helped with the island's housekeeping, taking brooms and mops to clean up their quarters before being taken to an immigration centre in Texas.

Mr. Alarcon, a former foreign minister who is president of Cuba's National Assembly, has insisted that Cubans are leaving because of economic hardships due to the 32-year-old U.S. economic embargo and not political oppression.

"If you want to find a real resolution to this problem you cannot ignore the sources of the problem," he told the Cable News Network. "And the sources are the economic embargo."

Spanish Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez apparently agreed, saying that the U.S. policy of discussing migration in isolation was self-defeating. "Emigration is strictly a product of Cuba's problems and specifically of its relation with the United States," he told Madrid's El Pais newspaper.



A two-year-old Cuban girl is brought aboard the Coast Guard cutter Matineus after her family's raft was picked up in the Florida Straits. The Coast Guard continues to pick up about one thousand Cuban refugees a day (AFP photo)



A United States Coast Guard medic aboard the USCGC Cutter Matineus assists a Cuban rafter suffering from dehydration after he was picked up at sea off the Cuban coast (AFP photo)

U.N. warns Pope's life 'at risk' in Sarajevo

SARAJEVO (R) — U.N. peacekeepers warned on Monday that Pope John Paul II's life would be at risk on a Sarajevo visit and accused Muslim forces of deliberately hitting the city's airport with a mortar shell last month.

With the Vatican under pressure to decide whether the 74-year-old pontiff should go ahead with his visit to the Bosnian capital Thursday, a U.N. official who asked not to be named said: "The Pope's life will be at risk and the lives of those around him will be at risk as well."

The Papal aircraft will land at the airport and be will be exposed to sniper fire in the city which is surrounded by Serb besiegers and defended by the government army.

Informed sources said Vatican officials could wait until the eve of the visit before making a final announcement. Pope John Paul was anxious to make his "pilgrimage of peace" provided it did not endanger the local population.

The main obstacle has been the refusal of Bosnian Serbs to guarantee the Pope would not be harmed. Their leader, Radovan Karadzic, told the Vatican he was worried the Muslims might launch an attack and blame Serbs.

His fears were given weight by the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) which blamed Muslims Monday for a deliberate attack with an Israeli-made mortar on Sarajevo Airport on Aug. 18.

"The results of all our investigations show the shell clearly came from (the government) lines," Lieutenant Colonel Pierre Ducros said. The Bosnian government, embarrassed by the timing of the disclosure, told UNPROFOR it did not accept the finding.

The U.N. stressed the incident was a direct and intentional targeting of the airport, "on which Sarajevo's 380,000 population relies for its daily needs." UNPROFOR said that ultimate responsibility for the safety of the Pope, making potentially the most dangerous trip of his 15-year pontificate, lies with the government.

together with a major offensive by the Bosnian Serb Army (BSA) against Muslim troops who suffered severe casualties north of the capital near Breza.

Canadian U.N. officers reported the Serbs used artillery during the fighting in defiance of a heavy weapons exclusion zone enforced around the city by UNPROFOR.

"(The Muslims) took a terrible pounding in the last two or three weeks," one officer said. "They are scratching to put up some sort of defence."

The offensive underlined the Bosnian Serb's military superiority over government forces despite the increasing flow of weapons reaching Muslim fighters in recent months.

The Bosnian Serb Army is confident it can retain its advantage for the foreseeable future even if the United States can persuade the U.N. nations to lift its arms embargo against the Muslims.

U.S. President Bill Clinton will ask the Security Council for the embargo's removal unless Bosnian Serbs lift their opposition by Oct. 15 to a big power peace settlement deal.

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viding Bosnia between them and a Muslim-Croat federation.

Russia, which helped craft the peace agreement, threatened Monday to join Britain and France in withdrawing its troops from UNPROFOR if the embargo was lifted by the U.N. or by the United States acting alone.

Vitaly Churkin, Moscow's mediator in former Yugoslavia, told Icterfax News Agency the move would rebound on the Muslims by prompting an escalation of the war.

Serbs in northern Bosnia have stepped up their expulsions of Muslims and Croats from the region since rejecting the big power peace proposal.

Hundreds of Muslim women, children and old people were driven from their homes in Bijeljina and Janja in the north at the weekend to Muslim-held Tuzla.

International Red Cross spokeswoman Lisa Jones said the refugees reported that Serbs intended to empty both places of all Muslims by Sept. 8, the day the Pope is due in Sarajevo.

are suspending the strike because of the reality on the ground," one said.

The strikers have achieved none of their aims. Mr. Abiola remains in detention facing treason charges for proclaiming himself president in defiance of Gen. Abacha's government.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation. Established 1975.

جورنال تيمز يردنية عربية سياسية مستقلة تصدر بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الاردنية

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The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays. Subscription and advertising rates are available from the Jordan Times advertising department.

Challenge before panel

THE DEBATE that took place Sunday between the chairman and members of the Royal Commission on Modernisation and reform, on the one hand, and representatives of the private sector, on the other, could be just the right medicine for abetting our economic and business atmosphere provided the scope of such discussions is wide and comprehensive enough to touch upon all aspects of development. As His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the chairman of the panel, told the private sector's leaders, "the Commission has been set up to help create a national atmosphere for the adoption of a sound course of action and attitudes with which we can deal with the world community so that our voices can be heard loud and clear and win with us the world's respect." The ultimate objective of this panel is to create a new Jordan, the Regent went on to say, by modernising its ways of conducting business and attaining a comprehensive development programme.

Since the commission is not a substitute for Parliament, its purpose is to advise and consult with the various sectors of the Jordanian society be they private or public with a view to elevating Jordanian methods of work to a much higher plateau that is cost effective, efficient and productive. All of us know only too well how cumbersome and outdated the current ways of conducting business are. Stifling bureaucracy, inefficient and unresponsive civil service, and uncoordinated legislations have effectively suffocated the national political will to modernise the country and put it on par with the most modern countries of the world.

Obviously we are not speaking here of only state-of-the-art mechanical technologies but also the elevation of Jordanian intellectual technologies to the needed level that is commensurate with the national desire to put Jordan on the modern map of the world. In the final analysis the commission is a think-tank and working group of people who are well-versed not only with business and development but also with the other complementary dimensions of progress. It would be in order for the panel to invite other Jordanians drawn from academia, press and the legal profession to their meetings in order to broaden its horizons and assure its success. The new Middle East which is emerging on the heels of the current peace effort calls for modernisation in every sense of the world and across the board. Jordan needs to modernise its educational system, its legal system and its business and developmental legislations and methods of work. The dialogue initiated by the Crown Prince is a good start on which additional steps can be taken to reach our consensus goal of peace with prosperity.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A COLUMNIST in Al Ra'i daily criticised a government decision to give raises to the secretaries general of ministries, deputies and ministers, saying that such moves can by no means end poverty or unemployment in the country. It seems that the government is intent on handling chronic issues by carrying out cosmetic surgery and treating serious illness through Aspirins, said Sultan Al Hattab. The writer said the whole socio-economic situation in Jordan requires serious debate and immediate solutions at the national level, especially as the country is entering a new stage and a new era of peace. One cannot help feeling that the decision-makers in the Kingdom lack the experience in handling issues of unemployment and all they focus attention on is a way of curtailing expenses and rephrasing job descriptions of government positions, said the writer. He said that decision-makers do not give due attention to the investors' plans for development and for creating new jobs that can end many of the country's economic ills. The government, added the writer, should open its ears to the complaints and adopt practical methods to ease the situation.

ADDRESSING THE world population conference which opened in Cairo Monday, a columnist in Al Dastour said that Third World countries have voiced their condemnation of the conference because they are unhappy about the idea of curtailing the rate of their population growth. But, said the writer Taher Al Adwan, one of these Third World nations, including Arab and Muslim states, gave any thought to UNICEF reports about the daily deaths of Iraqi children as a result of the continued embargo. We are imposing a siege on 18 million Arabs living in Iraq and pushing them to die of hunger and diseases and so we are fulfilling the aims of the very conference which we as Arabs and Muslims are opposing, said the writer. It is ironic to see Arabs and Muslims fighting the idea of curtailing population growth and allowing thousands of Iraqi children to die as a result of sanctions which have caused so much suffering to the innocent population. Stop the real death of Iraqi children and stop involving yourselves in imaginary battles against what has been termed as a U.S.-Zionist conspiracy against the population of the Third World, said the writer. He said that the Arabs and Muslims can terminate the sanctions on Iraq and so contribute to saving millions of lives.

The View from Fourth Circle

Strange bedfellows or natural soulmates?

By Rami G. Khouri

STRANGE BEDFELLOWS, indeed, many people thought upon seeing the Vatican, Egypt's Al Azhar Islamic centre, the Iranian government, and others come together recently to oppose parts of the draft declaration of this week's United Nations Conference on Population and Development in Cairo. This peculiar convergence of Vatican/Islamist views on pre-marital sexual morality, abortion and birth control, however, may be far more than a passing coalition of convenience. It may be an early skirmish and a marker of battle lines in a new global confrontation between the secular and the religious.

The Vatican and the Islamists may turn out to be not so much strange bedfellows, but rather natural soulmates. Their deeply held worldviews may be the cutting edge of a wider global community of people who are instinctively resisting the excesses of Western, predominantly American-driven, materialistic consumerism. In the wake of the cold war and ideological polarisation, we are seeing here aspects of a new world divide that is defined by several overlapping criteria including rich and poor, North and South, individual and communal, religious and secular, material and spiritual.

The folks opposing some parts of the Cairo declaration are not fringe religious freaks. These are the spokesmen of what may be a global moral — but not so silent — majority. When the Vatican, Al Azhar and Iranian leaders spoke in more or less a single voice, many people initially reacted with bemusement. When Saudi Arabia and a few other states skipped or downgraded their representation in the Cairo conference, bemusement turned to more focused attention on the possible political implications and true dimensions of what is going on here.

Late last week, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops in the United States and the American Muslim Council put out a joint statement requesting the Cairo conference to explicitly endorse national policies that help women avoid abortions. What started out as the views of international theological purists suddenly moved closer to the mainstream of American and Western political culture. The question remains: What is this really all about?

The Cairo conference controversy is only superficially about population stabilisation, sex, and fertility choices for women. I suggest that it is really about whose vision of society will triumph in the early decades of the third millennium — a hypermodern, Western, libertarian, individualistic free-for-all market of materialism in which

corporations and their mainly white male elites grow rich because they allow people to buy sex, pizza and lawn furniture by phone from the comfort of their own homes; or, a more traditional, group-oriented society in which the entire community survives and progresses because it nurtures family, tribal and ethnic links and religious values.

It would be foolish to dismiss the Vatican/Islamist axis as the last gasp of the past. In the last decade and a half, Western critics have routinely dismissed reassertive Islamism as a combination of feudal romanticism and violence-prone emotionalism. The tendency is to do this again now on the Cairo conference issues, but this becomes more difficult given the fact that the Islamists' partner today is not a collection of bearded, robed, dark skinned radicals from the South, but clean-shaven, robed, mostly white clerics from the Vatican.

The temporary Catholic-Islamist coalition at hand requires a more rational response from the Western mainstream than the dismissive, racist attitudes to Islamism reassertion in recent years. And this is what we are seeing and hearing. The retort to the anti-Cairo crowd is denominated in substantive, often empirical and quantitative facts, often reflecting surveys of the attitudes of Catholics around the world. An interesting precedent is upon us: If the Western political and media mainstream responds to old fashioned Catholic views by making the effort to find out what the people themselves want, can we now expect the West also to respond to the views of Islamism and other Third World political leaderships by also making the effort to find out what the people want? The prospects are intriguing, and there will be many opportunities to see this happen in the future.

While it may not last very long on the strength of the sexual issues being raised in Cairo, the move Vatican-Islamist coalition or derivatives of it are likely to reassert themselves frequently, in other forms and other places, in North and South. The handful of states that skipped Cairo or downgraded their representation are, like the conference itself, only symbols; the real issue at hand is the deeper struggle underway between material secularism and a far older and more pervasive concept of community that is most frequently defined and protected by religious values.

This is happening in North and South alike. We see the continuing strength of the Christian right in American state politics. We heard the Pakistani president last week ask

Islamic states (Islamic, not developing, or brown, or poor, or South states) to pool their energy research in order to face up to anti-Islamic technology embargoes by the West. We heard the former leader of the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People (NAACP), Benjamin Chavis, speak of his downfall and attempted political recovery as a "crucifixion (and)... a resurrection". The vital role of the church in leading the American civil rights struggle, the anti-apartheid struggle, and other quests for freedom and justice is well chronicled history. And there are many other examples of the important role of religion and spirituality in the current, temporal affairs of society.

Those who feel threatened or marginalised routinely blend religious and political terms in their rhetoric. The critics of the Cairo declaration are unambiguous: a Saudi Arabian columnist said the meeting was "an attempt to tear the values and beliefs of Islam from their roots," while the Muslim World League charged that the conference's draft document propagated licentiousness and discarded religion; a Sudanese government minister said his country's boycott of Cairo was "a kind of holy war against the new hegemony which some seek to impose on us"; the Pope's chief spokesman charged that the Cairo conference risked becoming "a session called to sanction a current life style in minority circles of certain opulent societies," and to impose those values on "the emerging, less developed cultures of our society."

We should not miss the signs of wide and deep discontent that is now being expressed in explicit religious terms by people from the four corners of the globe who believe that religion, politics and society do, indeed, mix, and always have, and always will. Except for the last few hundred years in several dozen novel nation-states astride the North Atlantic rim, all people, in all places, during all recorded time have seen culture/religious values define their societies. It would be simplistic to expect such a time honoured human reality and historical force to suddenly disappear because the pizza delivery man is at the door.

Editor's note: Jordan Times columnist Rami G. Khouri is spending the autumn semester as a visiting scholar at the Global Affairs Institute, Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY, from where he will continue to write his column on a by-weekly basis.



Swedes catch cold as welfare blanket is pulled away

By Vibeke Laroi
Reuter

LINKÖPING, Sweden — In the heartland of Sweden, ordinary people are coming to grips with the idea that the blanket of state welfare which has kept them warm for decades is slowly being pulled away.

"People waited for Santa Claus. Now they have to participate more actively in solving problems," says Hakon Lofstedt, a Social Democratic Party councillor in this Swedish city 200 km south of Stockholm.

"Before there was the view that the state and the municipality would take care of everything," he added.

The thought of a society without the traditional safety net is slowly beginning to dawn on some Swedes, although its attraction still appears to outweigh its financial cost.

Opinion polls tip the Social Democrats, who promise to retain most of the country's comprehensive welfare state, to defeat a conservative coalition in the general election on September 18.

"The security in this country is so self-evident. I don't think people realise what society would be like if we didn't have it," said self-employed Carina Kalmér, 36.

"There are no guarantees for anything, but people still think society will fix everything," said Ms. Kalmér, who works at a window repair shop in old Linköping, the restored town centre made up of preserved buildings from the 18th and 19th centuries.

Many ordinary Swedes wonder where their country is heading.

"We will have to change our welfare state. It's a scary truth which people don't like to talk about," said a 32-year-old hospital worker.

Gone are the days when the centre-left political par-

ties could be relied on to guarantee full social cover. Even the Social Democrats, architects of the welfare state, say they will trim benefits and raise taxes, a campaign pledge which in most countries would mean political suicide.

"This is the first time politicians are not promising any reforms — quite the opposite. They have said they will cut down," said Birgitta Johansson, chairwoman of the conservative city council.

"It's like a competition — the party which cuts the most wins," said a Linköping taxi driver.

Politicians giving speeches in front of little wooden election huts in the city centre and passing voters agree that the overriding election issue is record high unemployment.

Linköping, bordered by farmland, forests and lakes, has seen its social payouts rocket to \$26 million a year from \$11 million a few years ago, mainly due to the sharp rise in payments of unemployment benefits — about \$13 million worth.

"The building up of the welfare state in the 1950s went too fast, there was one benefit after the other," said Elis Jarhall, a 71-year-old pensioner.

"No one told us we wouldn't be able to afford it," he said.

Paying for the welfare state has left Sweden with a big budget deficit and huge debt supporting a massive social infrastructure — regarded in the 1970s as a global model for social democracy — that still guarantees generous support from birth to death.

Perspective is important in Sweden, where poverty is relative. There are no soup kitchen queues or groups of homeless in Linköping. Sweden's fifth largest city, where the jobless rate is about nine per cent.

However, unemployment is a reality that is creeping into the lives of most people. Linköping, like many

Swedish towns, has a small town feel.

Shops are closing, sales of radios and televisions have dropped, hospitals are cutting staff and people are staying at home rather than taking holidays overseas since the crown fell sharply in value.

"I've been unemployed for a long time, but I feel more sorry for my father who is unemployed. He's 45 years old and it isn't easy to get a job at that age," said 22-year-old Cici Edlund.

Many students at the University of Linköping have given up hope after being bombarded with the number of new jobless every week.

"It's all just about jobs, jobs, jobs. We're constantly being told there aren't enough jobs," said Christian Ericsson, a 29-year-old student. "I don't dare hope for anything."

Apathy has spread to many of the 129,000 population, where the main employers are the state or municipality, the university and its hospital and the automotive and aircraft group Saab-Scania.

Some voters in Linköping, which has swung back and forth between Conservative and socialist local governments in recent elections, said they might vote for the Social Democrats.

They hope the party, which has about half of voter support in opinions polls, would give Sweden the stable, majority government they believe it needs.

Others say there is little difference between the parties.

"I'm blasé. Sweden is in a crisis so things won't get better no matter who wins," said Ann Stern, a 33-year-old mother of three.

"We had a Conservative government after the Social Democrats and that didn't help. It goes in waves. People are disappointed so they may vote for the Social Democrats again."

Russian mafia invades Cyprus

By Michael Jansen

NICOSIA, Cyprus has deported a dozen Russians arrested in August on charges of extortion, conspiracy to commit a criminal offense and illegal possession of arms, and is threatening to expel three more charged in court in June for trying to extort money from a Ukrainian publisher based in Nicosia. Cases against all the accused fell apart when victims refused to sign complaints or testify. The three claimed to be "beyond the law," members of a Russian mafia family. It looks like fear of reprisals has placed them "beyond the law" in Cyprus as well as in their homeland.

These cases have made Cyprus aware of overseas mafia crime which in London and New York emerged as tax and insurance fraud and drug trafficking. So far the mafia has not taken up such activities in Cyprus. Instead, its "enforcers" have come to Cyprus to extend "protection" to Russian offshore businesses established here and mafiosi have come to launder ill-got gains.

The most flagrant money laundering operations have consisted of Russians turning up at off-shore and on-shore banks to deposit suitcases of cash, on occasions totalling \$10-15 million, for transfer to Swiss or other banks outside Cyprus. However, following a tightening of control by the Cyprus Central Bank this sort of activity has fallen off. Instead, mafiosi, acting as legitimate businessmen armed with credentials from legitimate banks in Russia, establish legitimate offshore firms in Cyprus and launder illegitimate profits by opening letters of credit and concluding fictional deals through which they can inject funds into the international banking system.

Both these activities are worthwhile because Cyprus has, in the past three years, become a major offshore business and banking centre for Eastern Europe.

Since the collapse of the Soviet system and the conversion of Russia and the countries of Eastern Europe to capitalism, businessmen from these countries have poured into Cyprus. During 1993 more than half of the 2,892 new registrations of offshore companies were East European, the majority Russian. Four of the 23 offshore banks operating here are Russian and five of the seven banks which have opened representative offices are Russian.

Cyprus developed as an offshore business centre after the adoption in 1975 of a

law taxing at a rate of 4.25 per cent company profits. Lebanese and foreign businessmen driven out of Beirut by the civil war, which began that year, promptly took advantage of the island tax haven only a half an hour from home-base. Many foreign firms established regional bases here to exploit booming markets in the oil rich Gulf state. By 1983 foreign exchange revenue from the offshore sector had risen to \$40 million and today revenue stands at \$240 million, contributing more than agriculture and rivaling tourism.

Eastern Europe entered the Cypriot offshore sector in the late eighties, just as Middle Eastern business was withdrawing as a result of a regional slump. Sophocles Michaelides, director of the offshore Banking Unit at the Cyprus Central Bank, said that Eastern Europe has more than made up for the loss of Middle East business. "The money involved is much bigger, the companies involved are much bigger and the volume of trade is much bigger. Eventually Cyprus will be to Russia what the Channel Islands are to Britain" as an offshore business and banking centre.

The Russians are coming here for several reasons, he asserted. Russia and Cyprus have a very advantageous tax treaty. Russians are looking for a free market and a means of avoiding exchange controls in doing business on the international scene. They can use the island's efficient banking facilities, its communications networks and enjoy the professional service of Russian-speaking Cypriots, educated in the former Soviet Union. Furthermore, the cost of operating from Cyprus compares favourably with other offshore centres. Cyprus, located at the eastern edge of Europe, is close to the former Soviet bloc; it is Orthodox by religion as are Russians, Bulgarians and Serbs, and Russians, hailing from the cold north, enjoy the island's sea and sun and Mediterranean style of life.

Positive proof of this final attraction is that Russian tourist arrivals have risen to 4,000 a week. To accommodate this flood, the Cyprus government, in May, increased the number of cheap charter flights and package holidays in hotels with Russian-speaking staff.

Since virtually all Russian businesses have some sort of mafia protection at home, it is not surprising that the mafia should follow them to Cyprus and that there should be complaints to the police and arrests of mafia "enforcers" trying to

extend the influence of the mafia families to overseas Russian enterprises. These "enforcers" are much easier for the Cypriot authorities to identify and deal with than are the money launderers. Legitimate businesses and banks, affiliated with the Russian central bank, are easily established by the mafia in Russia because there are no efficient and effective regulatory bodies. (According to the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation, which has established an office in Moscow to monitor the mafia, 40 out of 260 banks there are mafia owned).

And once a business applying to register in Cyprus has been given clearance by the Russian central bank, the Cypriot authorities are obligated to accept its credentials. Although an agent of Russia's Federal Counterintelligence Service, the former KGB, told a local businessman, "Cyprus is the mafia's major centre for money laundering," the Russians have not provided the Cyprus police with evidence to prove this allegation. And, the authorities here, who carefully examine the books of every offshore enterprise, contend that the volume of business done by Russian offshore companies would not support that allegation. An informed source said Cyprus was probably being used to launder "small change" only, considering the volume of profits generated by mafia activities in Russia and Eastern Europe. The majority of Russians operating from Cyprus are not money launderers but legitimate businessmen although they may be, increasingly, plagued by the mafia "enforcers."

There are an estimated 5,500 Russian mafia groupings, many of them based on ethnic ties — Ukrainian, Georgian, Tchetchen and Vietnamese. But experts believe that three or four men, all Russians, dominate the entire organised crime scene. The major groups are functional, rather than geographic. They control protection for specific business activities rather than regions. Protection is based on a fixed percentage of turn-over. The organisation is so secretive that minor bosses and "enforcers" may not even know to which vertical structure their grouping may belong. This formidable underground has flourished in Russia and neighbouring countries because of corruption, the collapse of the moral fibre of the society and a bewildering array of rules and regulations governing business activity.

مكتبة من الكتب

Washington's Asian policy faces new economic realities

WASHINGTON (UPI) — The U.S. government's Asian policy is being reshaped by new economic realities, according to a report by the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) released Monday.

The report, titled "U.S. Trade Policy: A Review of the Economic and Political Environment," says that the U.S. government's Asian policy is being reshaped by new economic realities, including the rapid growth of the Asian economies and the increasing competition for U.S. companies in the region.

The report also notes that the U.S. government's Asian policy is being reshaped by new economic realities, including the rapid growth of the Asian economies and the increasing competition for U.S. companies in the region.

John Bryson, chairman of Southern California Edison Co., a major U.S. utility that expects to sign \$2 billion worth of contracts in China, said he has never seen the U.S. government and business work so closely together in developing overseas export markets, particularly in Asia.

"The United States government is an extremely effective partner and advocate for the United States business community," said Mr. Bryson, also a member of the delegation. "We are very pleased by the leadership provided by the commerce secretary."

Mr. Brown said that for the first time in its history, the United States has developed an export policy that will actively use America's political power and diplomacy to win contracts for its companies overseas.

"This is a new partnership between the U.S. government and the U.S. business community," said Mr. Brown, whose trip to China yielded more than \$6 billion in contracts for U.S. companies. "And we are only at the beginning of what we can accomplish... one of our priorities has to be creating jobs for Americans."

Delegation members said the United States had also been falling behind European countries, particularly Germany, France and Britain, because of the soft loans or aid they provide to Asian countries tied to projects involving companies from their respective countries.

Mr. Brown said the United States export bank is taking a new aggressive approach in linking development loans and grants to projects involving American companies.

"We will use all the fair and legitimate tools at our disposal to ensure that we win the market share that we expect in China, in Hong Kong, in Asia and around the world," Mr. Brown said.

China's economic superno could barely sleep from high inflation

BEIJING (R) — China's inflation last month was over 20 per cent, an official newspaper reported Monday, and the country's economic superno was quoted as saying he could barely sleep from worrying about price rises.

The China Information Daily called the August figure for annual inflation intolerable for some people.

It did not say whether it was referring to the retail price index in major cities or the residents' consumer price index for the whole country.

Inflation in major cities in July stood at an annual 24.2 per cent and for the whole country in June was 20 per cent.

practically cannot sleep," Zhu Rongji, vice-premier in charge of the economy, was quoted by Hua Sheng newspaper as saying in a speech last month.

China's high inflation is a major problem, and we hope to see a sharp drop in inflation," he said. "If we do not control food prices, the price of everything and it will be a disaster for the people to live."

While the likelihood of the second and third scenarios was low, he said, the risk remained.

Fresh in the mind of policy-makers is the last serious

Chile sees trade pact with U.S. in a year or two

SANTIAGO (R) — Chile's Finance Minister said Sunday he hoped his country could sign a free trade accord with the United States in two years that would revolutionize the Chilean financial system.

"When Chile has a bilateral accord signed with the United States and eventually with Mexico and Canada, there will be a revolution in the national financial system," said Finance Minister Eduardo Aninat.

"I hope this happens in a year or two, at most," he said in an interview published Sunday in the Santiago daily El Mercurio.

He said Vice President Al Gore called him last month to confirm to him that Chile was next in line to join the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

"He gave us an optimistic vision, that things were going well," said Mr. Aninat, referring to the possibility of Chile joining NAFTA.

Chilean and U.S. officials have still not officially decided whether to make Chile the fourth partner in NAFTA or seek separate bilateral pacts between Chile and NAFTA's three current members.

Most analysts see both sides leaning toward NAFTA, although a decision is not expected until later this month.

Brazil scandal boosts chances of Mexican to head world trade body

GENEVA (R) — A political scandal in Brazil has strongly boosted the chances that Mexican President Carlos Salinas de Gortari will become head of the new World Trade Organisation (WTO), diplomats and analysts said Monday.

Brazilian Economy Minister Rubens Ricuperio, who resigned at the weekend, was widely seen as the main rival to Mr. Salinas for leadership of the WTO, due to come into being next year under the GATT trade treaty signed in April.

"I cannot see Ricuperio remaining seriously in the race after this affair," said one trade envoy whose country had favoured the Brazilian, a widely-respected former ambassador to GATT, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade.

An experienced GATT-watcher said Mr. Ricuperio's admission that he had bad financial figures to boost the presidential election campaign of his ministerial predecessor Fernando Henrique Cardoso "must at best spoil his chances for the WTO."

Mr. Salinas, who already has the implicit backing of the United States and many Latin American countries to become the first head of a world trade body from a developing country, was already viewed as the front-runner for the post.

Many trade officials and diplomats say that his record as a president who ditched the protectionist policies of decades and turned Mexico into an open economy would help give political weight to the fledgling WTO.

They point to the role of Mr. Salinas, who steps down later this year, in establishing the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) which links his country with the United States and Canada — unthinkable under previous Mexican administrations.

GATT chief Peter Sutherland, who has said he does not want the job, gave Mr. Salinas an effective plug last week by praising Mexico for becoming the first NAFTA country — and only the third GATT member — to complete legal approval of the

Turkey draws up new sell-off strategy

ANKARA (R) — After several false starts, Turkish Prime Minister Tansu Ciller's government has drawn up a new privatisation strategy which officials expect it to be submitted to parliament by the end of next week.

The government is now awaiting comments from the political parties before putting the final touches on the draft bill, officials said Monday.

Two earlier laws, approved by parliament, were annulled by the constitutional court after opposition deputies and even some from Ms. Ciller's coalition partners challenged the measures as illegal.

After the past failures, Ms. Ciller is now seeking a mandate for the delayed eight-year-old sell-off programme — a key part of her economic plan.

Under the new draft, shaped after a series of inter-party debates last month, Turkey will give priority to the sale of state banks, accounting for nearly half of the banking system.

It proposes creation of a privatisation undersecretariat and a safety net for employees who may lose their jobs as well as introduction of an anti-cartel law.

Turkey will also maintain a "golden share" in some firms in strategic sectors, including energy, telecommunications and defence. It will sell the right to operate mines rather than outright ownership.

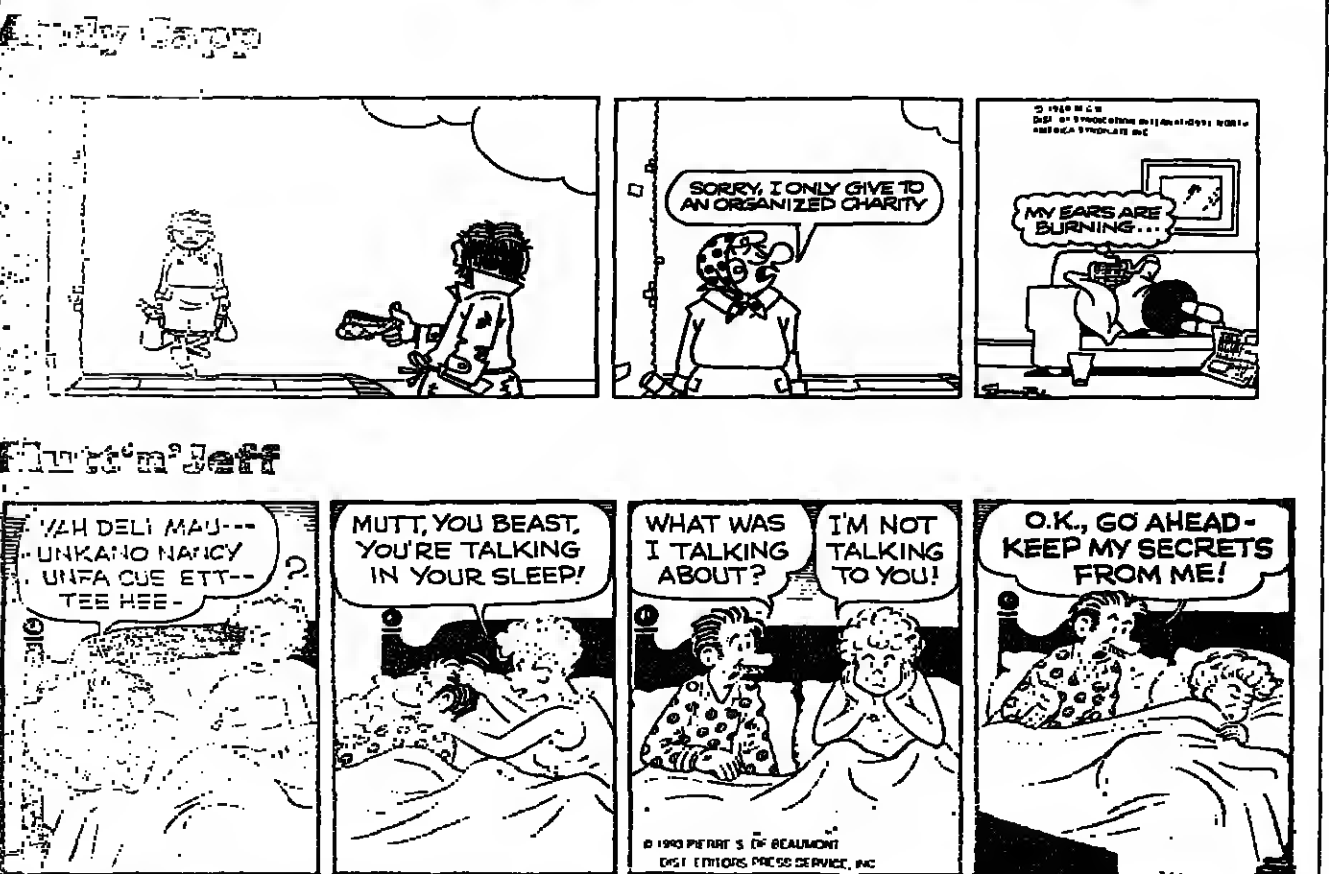
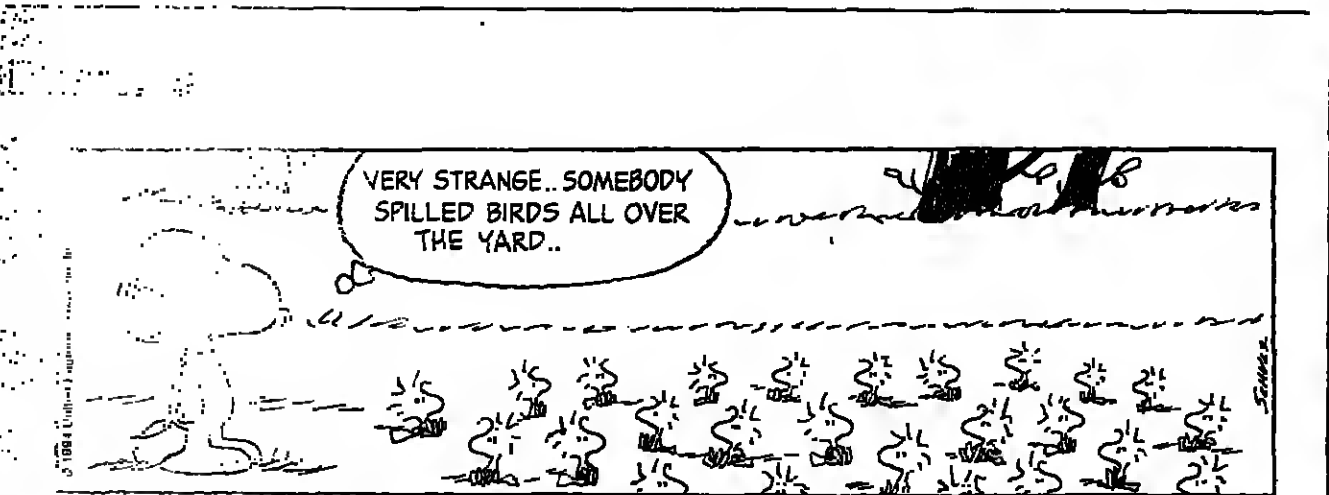
The government will create a privatisation fund to prevent use of the proceeds to finance huge budget deficits.

A high board of privatisation, to consist of the prime minister and three other key

Financial Markets

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Country	Rate
Canada	0.75
France	6.55
Germany	1.36
Italy	1.36
Japan	163.60
UK	1.49
Switzerland	1.48
Spain	166.37
Sweden	8.46
Norway	4.76
Denmark	6.46
Finland	5.94
Greece	340.75
Portugal	200.48
Ireland	7.88
Netherlands	1.83
Austria	1.33
Belgium	1.36
Luxembourg	1.36
Poland	40.33
Czech Republic	166.07
Slovak Republic	130.26
Hungary	200.48
Slovenia	200.48
Croatia	200.48
Serbia	200.48
Bosnia	200.48
Herzegovina	200.48
Yugoslavia	200.48
Romania	200.48
Bulgaria	200.48
Greece	340.75
Turkey	1.80
Israel	1.80
South Korea	170.00
China	8.27
Hong Kong	7.75
Taiwan	16.00
Thailand	50.00
Malaysia	3.80
Singapore	1.36
Philippines	46.00
Indonesia	1,500.00
Brunei	1.36
Mexico	16.00
Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate	
US Dollar	0.70
UK Pound	0.75
Swiss Franc	1.48
Japanese Yen	163.60
German Mark	1.36
French Franc	6.55
Italian Lira	1,360.00
Spanish Peseta	166.37
Portuguese Escudo	200.48
Dutch Guilder	1.83
Belgian Franc	1.36
Austrian Schilling	1.33
Polish Zloty	40.33
Czech Koruna	166.07
Slovak Koruna	130.26
Hungarian Forint	200.48
Slovenian Tolar	200.48
Croatian Kuna	200.48
Serbian Dinar	200.48
Bosnian Dinar	200.48
Herzegovian Dinar	200.48
Yugoslav Dinar	200.48
Romanian Leu	200.48
Bulgarian Lev	200.48
Greek Drachma	340.75
Turkish Lira	1.80
Israeli Sheqel	1.80
South Korean Won	170.00
Chinese Yuan	8.27
Hong Kong Dollar	7.75
Taiwan Dollar	16.00
Thai Baht	50.00
Malaysian Ringgit	3.80
Singapore Dollar	1.36
Philippine Peso	46.00
Indonesian Rupiah	1,500.00
Brunei Dollar	1.36
Mexican Peso	16.00



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THE BETTER HALF. By Glasbergen

"I need to burn more calories. I'll have to start changing channels faster!"

JUMBLE. THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME. By Henri Arnold

Unscramble these four jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

POCUR
RALNS
BALLEF
HIRTED

HOW EMPLOYEES GO FOR THAT FIVE O'CLOCK WHISTLE.

Now arrange the circled letters to form the SURPRISE answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print answer here: _____

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: LISLE SIEGE DINGHY WHALER
Answer: What the law made the crooked butcher see the error of—HIS WEIGHTS

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 6, 1994
By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Forget the old and what has been recently frustrating as you focus your attention on investigating any sort of new interest that will provide you with more worldly understanding and awareness.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Forget about arguing with others because your ideas are different. Keep your promises. Do nothing to upset your position of security.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Complete the work at hand before going into a new interest which could take more time than you anticipated. Be conscientious.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Use your good judgment; your hunches could be unreliable today. Steer clear of arguments, and avoid being social tonight.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Don't permit household matters to deter you from making progress possible. Don't lay into your mate over something trivial.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Concentrate on important routines now and handle communications tomorrow. Think very constructively and logically.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Try to meet the wishes of family as much as possible and avoid any new financial commitments. Don't argue with someone in business.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) If you get into a family argument, you can carry through very nicely with affairs at hand. Don't overspend for pleasure. Be sensible.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Get busy at being constructive and stop worrying over something you can do little about. Don't lay into family over something small.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Contact experts and find out how to add to your income. Take care while driving on the highway. Relax tonight with your loved ones.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Exercise care in the handling of finances now, or you could make expensive errors. Be more concerned with personal matters.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Collect as much data confidentially as you can in order to formulate a plan. Avoid a group affair where arguments could start. Be happy.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) This is a good day for communicating and improving conditions around you. Don't irritate a fellow associate. Forget your worries.

Birthstone of September: Sapphire — Lapis Lazuli

THE Daily Crossword by Roger Coburn

ACROSS

1. Food enhancer

2. Move snow

3. City km

4. Modern moolah

5. Hold back

6. Footnote abbr.

7. Do office work

8. Celebration

9. Sheltered, as a horse

10. Lovers

11. Bridge seat

12. Rake

13. Spanish measure

14. Expose

15. Presses

16. Sea course

17. Art movement

18. Unintended sound

19. Ono team

20. Church officers

21. Angry mood

22. Enjoy a book

23. Substituted seeds (graminaceous)

24. French philosopher

25. Lake lama horses

26. Duplicate

27. Algerian port

28. Seed (graminaceous)

29. Nolon

30. Be in front

31. Dalmatian

32. Yabba dabba—

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ances of trade body

But trade diplomats and officials say that during the summer backing appears to have increased for Seoul's trade minister, Kim Chul Su, who has spent his entire career in trade and visited Geneva to support in July.

Mr. Kim has the support of Australia and is expected to win formal endorsement from most if not all members of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and could gain backing elsewhere in Asia.

A possible compromise case of deadlock in the case of a decision to open a new trade area, from which a possible candidate is expected to emerge in November after consultations among GATT members, is New Zealand's Trade Negotiations Minister Philip Barlow.

But a strong challenge could come from Sweden where Prime Minister Carl Bildt — a proponent of the trade and open markets — faces possible defeat in an election next month and is looking for an international post, diplomats say.

ff strategy

senior official said, "The we will be mobilised to share in Turkey and abroad."

He said Turkey would offer shares on domestic foreign capital markets as well as selling in blocks. "We don't have too many choices. We have to use all present sale mechanisms."

PROSCOPE

TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 6, 1994

Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

JES: Forget the old and what has been in focus your attention on investigating the past will provide you with more wisdom.

poet 19) Forget about arguing with others. Keep your promises. Do nothing to hurt.

poet 20) Complete the work at hand before which could take more time than you think.

poet 21) Use your good judgment; you are able today. Steer clear of arguments and fights.

poet 22 to July 21) Don't permit household making progress possible. Don't lay out any trivial.

poet 21) Concentrate on important routine tasks tomorrow. Think very constructively.

September 22) Try to meet the wishes of the and avoid any new financial commitments to anyone in business.

October 22) If you get into a family through very nicely with affairs at hand. Be sensible.

to November 21) Get busy at being trying over something you can do little study over something small.

er 22 to December 21) Contact experts; your income. Take care while driving on the road with your loved ones.

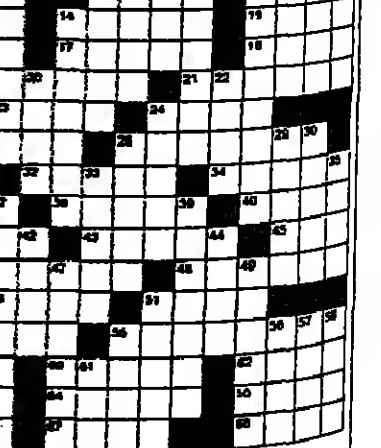
er 22 to January 20) Exercise care in the or you could make expensive errors. Be social matters.

to February 19) Collect as much data as possible to formulate a plan. Avoid a group and start. Be happy.

March 20) This is a good day for finding conditions around you. Don't irritate your worries.

Sapphire — Lapis Lazuli

SSWORD by Roger Coburn



Puzzle solved:

- 47 Substrate
- 48 Previews
- 51 French philosopher
- 52 Line name
- 53 Duplicate
- 54 Algebraic port
- 55 -sawed (material)
- 56 Notion
- 57 Be it more
- 58 Dwell
- 61 Yabba dabba

Financial Markets

Jordan Times in co-operation with Cairo Amman Bank

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	New York Close	Tokyo Close
Sterling Pound	1.5475	1.5460
Deutsche Mark	1.5550	1.5567
Swiss Franc	1.5065	1.5085
French Franc	5.3255	5.3282**
Japanese Yen	99.13	99.05
European Currency Unit	1.2975	1.2263**

1 USD Per STG
* European Opening in AMM, LAM, GMT

Interbank bid rates for various currencies (U.S. Dollars, LAM, GMT)

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Solidere ground-breaking ceremony this month

BEIRUT (R) — Lebanon's Solidere company will hold a ground breaking ceremony on Sept. 21 to launch the postwar reconstruction of central Beirut, company chairman Nasser Chamaa said.

The event, which will start what the company calls "the major urban redevelopment of the 1990s," will be sponsored by Lebanese President Elias Hrawi, Mr. Chamaa told Reuters.

Solidere, formed in May with \$1.82 billion capital, is poised to start reconstruction but has not yet chosen a contractor for the first stage of the infrastructure work, Mr. Chamaa said in a weekend interview.

Eleven bids have been opened, ranging from \$63 million to \$136 million, but the board of directors has not yet decided which to choose.

The infrastructure work, expected to take 18 months, includes roads, utility networks, tunnels and bridges, landscaping and laying out public squares and spaces.

Asked when the work would begin, Mr. Chamaa said: "We're working on this. I don't want to commit on a date."

"It's already happening. The demolition is ongoing and we're working out details of the contract with the infrastructure contractor," he added.

Solidere has already begun demolishing war-damaged buildings and shifting an estimated three million tonnes of rubble from the 1.8 million square metres site.

Explosives, wrecking balls and bulldozers have swiftly demolished 120 buildings in recent weeks, creating a vast empty lot in the heart of the city open to the Mediterranean shore.

Feyrouz, the Lebanese singer famed throughout the Arab World, will give the reconstruction of Beirut an emotional sendoff with a concert at the site on Sept. 17.

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	4.62	4.75	5.06	5.56
Sterling Pound	4.81	5.51	5.75	6.37
Deutsche Mark	4.68	4.75	4.87	5.81
Swiss Franc	3.95	4.06	4.25	4.62
French Franc	5.25	5.43	5.81	6.12
Japanese Yen	2.43	2.31	2.37	2.62
European Currency Unit	5.52	5.71	6.05	6.53

Interbank bid rates for various currencies (U.S. Dollars, LAM, GMT)

Arab Gulf countries to seek technology-for-oil deal with Japan

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Arab Gulf states will ask Japan to help them acquire industrial technology in return for stable crude supplies when they meet in Tokyo in November, a Gulf official has said.

The Nov. 7-9 conference in Tokyo will attract hundreds of officials and businessmen from Japan and its main oil suppliers in the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), said Abdul Rahman Al Jaafari, secretary general of the Doha-based Gulf Organisation for Industrial Consultancy (GOIC).

Mr. Jaafari, quoted by the official Emirates News Agency WAM, said the meeting would focus on bolstering economic, trade, scientific and technical cooperation with Japan, the top single commercial partner of the GCC.

"There are several spheres of cooperation to be discussed at the conference, including oil and gas, which Japan needs for a long time to come. We will also discuss what Japan can offer the GCC countries to help them diversify their economies through investment and the supply of technology," he said.

He said GCC states also needed Japanese technology for water desalination, environmental protection, agriculture and solar energy.

The conference will be the second between Japan and the GCC states, which have been locked in talks with major industrial powers to obtain technology needed for setting up new industries to reduce their reliance on oil.

The two sides met in Bahrain last year and agreed on regular contacts to discuss boosting relations and eventually sign an economic cooperation pact.

The talks followed criticism by GCC officials that Japan's investments in the region did not match the strong ties between the two sides.

According to official figures, Tokyo's investment in the GCC stands at around \$4 billion, compared with its total foreign investment of more than \$386 billion.

By contrast, Japan is the GCC's biggest commercial partner, with their two-way trade standing at around \$35 billion in 1993. It is the top importer of Gulf oil, receiving nearly 60 per cent of its total crude imports from the region.

Japanese officials expect the level to exceed 70 per cent by the year 2000 as demand in Japan is rising steadily and other sources of supply are declining. Meanwhile, output capacity in the Gulf is growing.

Japan has sought long-term crude supplies from the GCC, which controls around 45 per cent of total proven world oil reserves.

But the GCC countries — Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain and Oman — want Japan to embark on joint ventures to help them obtain technology.

The United States and the European Union argue that the Gulf market is too small for major projects and investment laws need to be improved.

"The conference comes at a time when Gulf states have started boosting their oil and gas production capacities and new investment opportunities are emerging in the region," a GCC official told AFP.

"We will again explain to our Japanese partners that cooperation will benefit all of us. They could have a reliable, long-term source of supply but we also want a reliable source of technology."

The Riyadh-based GCC secretariat has already started asking regional businessmen about ways to enhance trade links with Japan by increasing non-oil exports. It urged them to present proposals ahead of the Tokyo meeting.

Shanghai market stages stunning bull run

HONG KONG (R) — Chinese domestic stocks staged a stunning bull run in Shanghai Monday, eclipsing percentage gains on other Asian stock markets with a 13 per cent surge in the A share index.

Outside China, South Korean share prices made the most ground, with the composite index soaring 2.29 per cent on what brokers in Seoul said were renewed hopes the bourse would rally by the end of the year.

In the region's major markets, Hong Kong's Hang Seng ended 60.48 points, or 0.61 per cent, higher at 9,962.04 after climbing to a peak of 10,064.86. Tokyo's Nikkei-225 average ended down 244.65 points, or 1.18 per cent, at 20,409.18.

Shanghai's A-share added 116.98 points, or 13.66 per cent, to 973.48 on record turnover of 15.49 billion yuan (\$1.8 billion), topping the former record of 12.8 billion yuan (\$1.5 billion) on Aug. 11.

Institutions, major individual investors went on buying spree, their confidence boosted by news the Beijing was pressing ahead with a plan to invite foreign funds into the domestic A-share market, brokers said.

In Seoul, brokers reported strong buying across the board, pushing some primary blue chips to record highs and lifting the composite index 21.73 points higher to 969.61, close to the day's high of 971.46.

Brokers said foreign investors, particularly U.S. and Japanese funds, led buying in Hong Kong while many local investors sought to take profits.

"This was a rally of pure fear and greed — fear the were missing out and greed the need to squeeze out the last drop," said Niall Gooding, head of research at Kleinwort Benson.

American cars lose ground in Saudi market

DAMMAM, Saudi Arab (AP) — General Motors (G.M.) and other U.S. auto manufacturers are losing ground in Saudi Arabia, company representatives have said.

General Motors saw sales in its largest export market decline by 10 per cent in the first half of this year, dealers reported.

G.M. sales are expected to slip another 10 per cent in the second half of the year amid general slump in the Saudi market.

The kingdom absorbs one-third of total G.M. production. General Motors accounts for an estimated 10 per cent of all American cars imported by Saudi Arabia, G.M. dealer Amir Al Zahr said.

Dealers blamed rising inflation for a drop in auto sales in a market where gasoline is cheaper than drinking water and the population is spread over much of the Arabian Peninsula.

Saudi Arabia, the world's largest oil-exporting nation, is facing economic difficulties because of the slump in world oil prices and the cost of 1993 Gulf war.

Last year, auto sales in Saudi Arabia dropped by 10 per cent, but the big U.S. car-makers — G.M., Ford and Chrysler — recorded only five per cent.

They sold 39,000 units in 1993 compared to about 41,000 the previous year.

Chrysler suffered the most, losing 19 per cent, while Ford shed seven per cent as G.M. 5 per cent.

The biggest slump was in passenger cars, where Chrysler posted a decline more than 40 per cent in the category against Ford's 60 per cent, according to statistics released by Saudi Arabia's G.M. dealers association.

Light trucks and pickup did slightly better. Mr. Zahr said sales of large utility grew by 3.5 per cent, primarily because of a good show for the GMC Suburban, which consolidated its market share by about 50 per cent.

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IOC takes new steps to combat doping in sport

PARIS (R) — The International Olympic Committee (IOC) intensified the fight against doping in sport Monday by adopting clear guidelines to athletes and federations in a long-awaited and far-reaching medical code.

The code lists all banned substances as well as acceptable medications and lays down standard penalties for offenders in a 78-page document which IOC medical chief Prince Alexandre de Merode described as a "cornerstone" of the doping battle.

De Merode also moved to clear up other confused areas of doping in sport by pledging urgent talks to stop what he called "intolerable" situations affecting athletes, including the case of Spanish Tour de France champion Miguel Indurain and British runner Diane Modahl.

De Merode said talks would be held with governments in an effort to get them to accept the IOC banned drugs list and not to enforce different standards.

Indurain faces a hearing in France this week for taking salbutamol during a cycle race in May even though he took it through an inhaler for a respiratory problem, a treatment allowed by the IOC and the International Cycling Union (UCI).

But salbutamol is totally banned under a tough French law to combat doping in sport.

"It's ridiculous to think that athletes must have a dictionary of doping laws before going into every single country to compete," de Merode told a news conference.

Modahl's case, where there was a nine-week delay in reporting the findings of a positive A, or first sample, of a dope test, was also unacceptable, he said.

De Merode said the IOC would put pressure on accredited laboratories to speed up their processes and would also talk with international federations on ways to avoid such delays.

IAAF concede Britain athletes 'legally not incorrect' to run

LONDON (R) — The International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) appeared to ease the pressure on Britain's women competing in this weekend's World Cup when General Secretary Sir Ivan Gyalai conceded Monday they were "legally not incorrect" to take part.

The team's participation was thrown into doubt by Diane Modahl's positive doping result in Portugal, but the British Athletic Federation announced last week they intended to compete.

"I have chosen my words carefully after studying the legal situation during the weekend," said Gyalai, speaking from the federation's headquarters in Monte Carlo.

"Regrettably for Britain, the end result may still be the same, that is they will have their results annulled. But they are not incorrect to compete."

British team spokesman Tony Ward said, "I am very pleased the IAAF have changed their attitude and now seem to be agreeing with what we have been saying all along."

Gyalai's statement is a departure from the IAAF's more hardline approach last week when they insisted, both publicly and privately, that the British team should be withdrawn from the competition.

Britain's participation was jeopardised after 800 metre runner Modahl tested positively for testosterone in Lisbon on June 18, a week before earning maximum points for Britain in the European Cup.

The results of that test were not known until nine weeks later. The "B" test sample produced a second positive result on Aug. 30 and Gyalai's statement on Monday was based on those two dates.

"At the present time, and until she is banned following a hearing, her suspension dates from Aug. 30, the date of the second test."

Asian Games organisers work to end Chinese boycott threat

TOKYO (R) — Asian Games organisers Monday asked the head of the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) to let them know which heads of state he has invited to the event as a disastrous Chinese boycott of the games looms closer.

The invitation issue involving OCA President Ahmad Al Fahad of Kuwait has turned into a diplomatic and security nightmare for Japanese officials for the games which open on Oct. 2 in Hiroshima.

The main worry is an OCA invitation issued to Taiwan President Lee Teng-Hui which has led China, the Asian Games champions since 1986, to threaten to boycott the games.

"We are urging the OCA headquarters in Kuwait to send a list of OCA president-invited guests. But we have not received any answer from the OCA," said a Hiroshima Asian Games official.

In Kuwait, an OCA official said Ahmad was out of the country until next weekend and had no comment on the row.

A record 7,300 athletes and officials from 42 nations are due to take part in the quadrennial sports event from Oct. 2 to 16, competing in 337 events in 34 sports.

The OCA is the sponsor of the games and Hiroshima organisers are worried time is running out to put the finishing touches on staging Asia's biggest sporting event because of uncertainty about China's participation.

They are even more mystified, and some officials even angered, at why a group like the OCA which is charged with overseeing sport in Asia would be so unaware of the sensitivity of the China-Taiwan issue.



ROMARIO LOSES: Barcelona's Brazilian match Sunday. Gijon defeated Barcelona 2-1 soccer star Romario (right) dribbles Sporting (AFP photo) de Gijon's David during their Spanish league

France shun Paris to heal Bulgarian trauma

Agencies

FRANCE'S Soccer team embark on a crucial international campaign in Slovakia this week, hoping to heal a string of traumas by qualifying for the 1996 European Championship in Britain.

Their first match in qualifying Group One, on Wednesday in Bratislava, will also be the first official tie for manager Aimé Jacquet, who replaced Gerard Houllier in the wake of the biggest trauma of all — France's 3-2 defeat by Bulgaria in Paris last November which stopped them reaching the World Cup finals.

The shock was such that Jacquet, who claims an unbeaten record of five games since he took over last December, said his team would not play at the Parc des Princes for the time being to avoid the hostility of Parisian fans.

"After the hard blow we suffered in Paris against Bulgaria, we cannot have France playing there again soon. The trauma is too deep," he told French daily Liberation.

"We'll get more support from a provincial crowd for a while," he added.

For that reason, France have decided to host Romania in St. Etienne next month in their second qualifier.

Players confirmed the pain was not erased yet.

"I know that the defeat (by Bulgaria) will haunt me for the rest of my life," defender Paul Le Guen said.

For Jacquet, who will have to do without injured stars Marcel Desailly and Jean-Pierre Papin on Wednesday, leading France to the European Championship finals is a must.

The Bulgaria defeat, however spectacular, was but the climax of a string of poor results in official competition.

Since playing the semifinals in the 1986 World Cup, the French have only made it to one official team competition.

Israel 2, Poland 1
Ronan Harazi scored twice

tion finals, the 1992 European Championship in Sweden, in which their poor showing led national legend Michel Platini to resign.

"My only goal is to lead this team to the European Championship in England. If I make it, I'll be the happiest man on earth," Jacquet said.

"The Euro 96 is a springboard for the 1998 World Cup. We need to go to England to smell the flavour of high-level competition ahead of 1998."

In 1998, France will host the World Cup finals and for once will not have to go through the qualifying stages. But they are keen to prove in the meantime that they can make it to the top the hard way.

Croatia 2, Estonia 0

Opening the qualifying matches of the European championships, Croatia made a triumphant debut Sunday in its first-ever major qualifying tournament, overpowering Estonia 2-0.

Davor Suker scored both goals in the one-sided match of Group Four teams.

The Sevilla striker drove in the first goal just a minute before halftime. Midway through the second half, he dashed an Estonian hopes for a draw when he weaved past defenders and tapped the ball past goalie Mart Poom.

Only a series of impressive saves by Poom kept Croatia from running up the score in the game, played in front of a sparse crowd.

Croatian players represented Yugoslavia, since splintered, in past international soccer competitions.

Estonia played in the European Championships before World War II, but Sunday's match was the country's first since regaining independence from the Soviet Union in 1991.

Cowboys open NFL season with win

PITTSBURGH, Pennsylvania (AFP) — New coach. Same results.

Two-time defending Super champion answered any doubts about how they would perform under new coach Barry Switzer, giving Jimmy Johnson's replacement a 26-9 victory over Pittsburgh here Sunday on the opening day of the National Football League (NFL) season.

"We knew there would probably be hell to pay if we didn't win," running back Emmitt Smith said. "Despite all the distractions, we're a team that is very determined. The Cowboys are fine. Just leave us alone and quit trying to tear us apart."

Smith, NFL rushing champion the past three years, ran for 171 yards and a touchdown against the Steelers. Quarterback Troy Aikman directed Dallas to scores on their first four drives and the Cowboys took their first step toward a third Super Bowl title next January in Miami.

"We're going to do it," receiving Alvin Harper said. "We're going to take it all the way to Miami."

Switzer, who was retired for five years before making Dallas his first NFL assignment, downplayed his role.

"The cowboys win because they're a team and I have better players than Jimmy started out here with," Switzer said.

Johnson was watching on television as part of the commentary team for the Fox network. The billion-dollar TV deal by Australian-born Rupert Murdoch was well received by most accounts.

The Dallas game was also noteworthy for having a fan rush onto the field and evade several policemen before falling to the ground where he was handcuffed and arrested before a national television audience.

William Thompson was charged with disorderly conduct and defiant trespass after rushing onto the field and shaking hands with two Dallas players late in the fourth quarter.

Top playmakers opened the season with exciting efforts. Joe Montana, who guided San Francisco to three Super Bowl titles, threw two touchdowns to spark Kansas City past New Orleans 30-17. Montana completed 24 of 33 passes for 315 yards.

Miami's Dan Marino suffered a torn Achilles tendon and missed the final 11 games of last season but returned with the second-largest passing game of his career. Marino completed 23 of 42 passes for 473 yards and five touchdowns as the Dolphins rallied to beat New England 39-35.

"I don't have to prove anything to anybody," Marino said. "I've been playing in this league for 12 years."

The biggest surprise came in Indianapolis, where rookie rusher Marshall Faulk gained 174 yards and scored three touchdowns for the Colts in a 45-21 rout of Houston. He rushed for 143 yards and scored on runs of 1, 2 and 11 yards. He also gave the Colts their first opening-quarter touchdown since 1992.

Buffalo, which lost the past four Super Bowls, showed poor form in a 23-3 home loss to the New York Jets. They had not lost an opener since 1987 and had won 12 of their past 13 games against the Jets.

Jason Hanson's 37-yard field goal in over-time lifted Detroit past Atlanta 31-28. Scott Mitchell's 15-yard touchdown pass to Anthony Carter with 30 seconds remaining in regulation forced the extra session. Mitchell and Atlanta's Jeff George each threw three touchdowns passes.

In other games, Arizona edged the Los Angeles Rams 14-12. Cleveland beat Cincinnati 28-20. Seattle dumped Washington 28-7. Chicago beat Tampa Bay 21-9. Green Bay edged Minnesota 16-10 and the New York Giants tripped Philadelphia 28-23.

Le Jingyi smashes record at world championships

ROME (AP) — Chinas Le Jingyi made a stunning start to the swim events at the World Championships Monday when she sliced almost half a second off the world record for the women's 100 metres freestyle.

With record holder Jenny Thompson swimming in the next lane, Le was first in her stroke in the final and had the race won by halfway as she powered to the gold medal in 54.01 seconds.

Another Chinese swimmer, Lu Bin, also beat Thompson's two-year-old mark of 54.48 to finish second with Germany's Franziska van Almsick winning the bronze in 54.77.

Thompson, who broke her arm in May but has since returned to form, finished fourth in 55.16 but found her record had been broken by 0.47.

"I'm a bit tense," Le said after her swim. "To finish in 54.01 that is a new world record is like a dream come true."

Le, who was fastest qualifier, led the field almost as soon as she hit the water and reached the turn in 52.79, half a body length ahead of her countrywoman.

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Those interested please call at the Language Centre for registration or further information. Registration begins Saturday, Sept. 10, 1994.

Colourful Christie rebounds

SHEFFIELD, England (AP) — Linford Christie, wearing an outfit that featured some of his press clippings, broke his three-race losing streak Sunday with a victory in the rarely-run 150 metres at the Sheffield International Meet.

Christie, world and Olympic 100-metre champion, outspurred fellow Briton and world 200-metre silver medalist John Regis to come home in 14.97 seconds, Regis clocked 15.15.

"Although I have lost three races, I have still won the championship medals and that's what really matters," said Christie, who was second to American Dennis Mitchell in the 100 at the Grand Prix final in Paris Saturday.

Jan Zelezny, who broke the world javelin record here last year, overcame the damp conditions to win the event again with a throw of 91.82 meters, the longest in the world this year.

The Sheffield meet is the traditional welcome-home event for British athletes at the end of the Grand Prix season, and Christie often uses the occasion to wear his most flamboyant outfits.

"It breaks up the monotony," said Christie, sporting the white suit with newspaper headlines such as "True Brit." "People come to this meeting to see what I am wearing and I like to give them something different."

Unser wins in Vancouver

VANCOUVER, British Columbia (R) — A. Unser Jr. won the weekend in the 1994 IndyCar Series, finishing first in the 100-mile race Sunday. Unser, who finished second in the 100-mile race Saturday, was the only driver to finish in the top three in both races. Unser, who finished second in the 100-mile race Saturday, was the only driver to finish in the top three in both races. Unser, who finished second in the 100-mile race Saturday, was the only driver to finish in the top three in both races.

GOREN BRID

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THE FA

PHILADELPHIA

SON OF PINK PANT

TODAY

ys open NFL with win

las players late in the game. Top playmakers opened the season with exciting efforts. Joe Montana, who guided San Francisco to the Super Bowl titles, threw two touchdowns to spark the City past New Orleans 30-17. Montana completed 24 of 33 passes for 315 yards.

Miami's Dan Marino threw a torn Achilles tendon and missed the final 11 games of last season but returned with the second-largest passing game of his career, throwing 473 yards and five touchdowns as the Dolphins rallied to beat New England 30-13.

"I don't have to prove anything to anybody," Marino said. "I've been playing this league for 12 years."

The biggest surprise came in Indianapolis, where rookie running back Marshall Faulk rushed for 143 yards and scored on runs of 1, 2 and 3 yards. He also gave the Colts their first opening-quarter touchdown since 1992.

Buffalo, which lost the previous Super Bowl, showed poor form in a 23-3 home loss to the New York Jets. The Jets had not lost an opener since 1987 and had won 12 of the past 13 games against the Jets.

Jason Hanson's 37-yard field goal in overtime lifted Detroit past Atlanta 31-28. Scott Mitchell's 15-yard touchdown pass to Anthony Carter with 30 seconds remaining in regulation forced the extra session. Mitchell and Atlanta's Jeff George each threw three touchdown passes.

In other games, Arizona edged the Los Angeles Rams 14-12, Cleveland beat Cincinnati 28-20, Seattle dumped Washington 28-7, Chicago beat Tampa Bay 21-9, Green Bay edged Minnesota 16-14 and the New York Giants tripped Philadelphia 28-21.

smashes record championships

zi Van Almsick winning the bronze in 54.77.

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Unser wins in Vancouver Mansell, Fittipaldi crash

VANCOUVER, British Columbia (R) — Al Unser Jr. started the weekend in bed and finished in the winner's circle late Sunday, as Britain's Nigel Mansell survived a crash with Brazil's Emerson Fittipaldi at the Vancouver Indy Car.

Suffering from food poisoning, Unser was too weak to attempt qualification Friday and was barely able to climb into his Penske Ilmor Saturday.

On Sunday he survived the numerous crashes, spins and flat tires that plagued everyone else and slowed the average speed to 89.166 miles-per-hour for the 102-lap race.

"We're pretty sure inside, but winning makes you feel better," said Unser, celebrating his third straight victory, eighth this year and 27th in his Indy car career.

Pole sitter Robby Gordon, forced to make extra pit stops caused by two flat tires and the loss of a third gear, finished 2.239 seconds behind Unser.

The brakes on Michael Andretti's Reynard Ford Cosworth kept locking up, causing him to hump into Canadian Paul Tracy and others, but he survived to finish third.

Mansell, the defending series champion, who is winless this year, appeared in top form, leading from lap 37 until his final pit stop on lap 75.

The Briton fell to sixth and was challenging Fittipaldi for third on the final lap, when he crashed in the last turn. Fittipaldi was credited with ninth and Mansell tenth.

Unser took on the lead on lap 77, running a very conservative race. "We watched

Morocco lose as World Cup hangover continues

JOHANNESBURG (R) — Morocco's World Cup hangover continued on a weekend of surprise results at the start of the African Nations Cup qualifying campaign.

The North African team, who lost all three of their matches at the World Cup, were beaten again in their first qualifying match for the 1996 nations cup finals in Kenya.

They were among several group favourites to drop points against unfancied opposition.

The Moroccans, who were the only one of Africa's World Cup representatives playing Sunday, surrendered a half-time lead to go down 2-1 Burkina Faso in their Group Seven match in Ouagadougou.

Abdoulaye Ouedraogo and Abou Ouattara scored in the second half for the home side after Taher El Khalef had put Morocco ahead after 30 minutes.

The Burkina were not the only surprise package as the Gambia, Mauritania and Ethiopia also upset the odds.

The Gambia, only occasional participants in African soccer tournaments, won an unlikely point away from home in holding Congo to a 1-1 draw in their group three match in Pointe-Noire.

Peter Johnson scored in the 38th minute for Gambia before Ivorian-based midfielder Sylvain Mounkassa salvaged a point for Congo with a 68th-minute goal.

Mauritania also surprised by forcing a goalless draw in Senegal in Group Two while Ethiopia held off a confident Algerian team in another scoreless tie in Group Four.

There were also good wins for Ghana, South Africa, Tunisia and Zimbabwe.

The new-look Ghanaian team beat Sierra Leone 4-1 in Accra to top the standings in Group Three while South Africa ended Madagascar's 10-year unbeaten home record with a 1-0 win in Group Five in Antananarivo.

The game's only goal was a header from Leeds United striker Phil Masinga in the 21st minute.

Tunisia, seeking to make up for the disappointment of their performance at the 1994 finals in March, won 3-1 away at Guinea Bissau in Group Two, while Zimbabwe thrashed Lesotho 5-0 in Group One in Harare.

The five-goal haul for the Zimbabweans included two for midfielder Vitalis Takwira.

Tanzania thrashed neighbours Uganda 4-0 on Saturday, with the first three goals coming inside the opening quarter-hour.

There was also a rare international goal for former African footballer of the year George Weah.

The Paris St. Germain striker scored the only goal of the game as Liberia beat Togo 1-0 in their Group Two match in Monrovia.

Edberg has only himself to blame after U.S. Open defeat

NEW YORK (AP) — Stefan Edberg has only himself to blame.

For years, Swedish tennis players took their cue from Bjorn Borg, roaming the baseline and depending on heavy topspin to pull the ball down into the court.

Then along came Edberg and his serve-and-volley game, climbing to no. 1 in the world and winning six Grand Slam titles, including two U.S. Opens.

Sunday night, Edberg met his clone — another Swedish serve-and-volleyer — and on this night, Joans Bjorkman dominated.

Bjorkman had the bigger serves, the crisper volleys, the more penetrating ground strokes. And when it was over, it was Bjorkman who had a berth in the U.S. Open fourth round following an easy 6-4, 6-4, 6-0 victory over the fifth-seeded Edberg.

"The game I play is exactly like Stefan's game, so I've always been looking at him, how he plays, and try to do the same thing," Bjorkman said.

Sunday night, he did it better than the real thing.

Bjorkman next will be Joern Renzenbrink of Germany, a 6-4, 6-1, 6-3 winner over Italy's Andrea Gaudenzi.

In other third-round matches Sunday, top-seeded Pete Sampras overtook Roger Smith of the Bahamas 4-6, 6-2, 6-4, 6-3; no. 4 Michael Stich defeated Byron

Black of Zimbabwe 7-6 (7-5), 6-2, 6-1; no. 14 Yevgeny Kafelnikov of Russia stopped Spain's Carlos Costa 6-3, 6-4, 6-2; Karel Novacek of the Czech Republic outlasted Todd Woodbridge of Australia 1-6, 5-7, 7-6 (8-6), 6-2, 7-6 (7-3); Argentina's Javier Frana eliminated Marcos Ondruska of South Africa 6-3, 6-1, 6-7 (3-7), 3-6, 6-4; and Jaime Yzaga of Peru defeated last year's surprise finalist, Frenchman Cedric Pioline, 1-6, 5-7, 7-5, 6-1, 6-4.

Advancing to the women's quarterfinals were second-seeded Arantxa Sanchez Vicario, no. 5 Kimiko Date, no. 8 Gabriela Sabatini and Gigi Fernandez.

Sanchez Vicario defeated Ann Grossman 6-2, 6-2; Date stopped Leila Meskhi of Georgia 6-2, 6-7 (5-7), 7-5; Sabatini ousted Elena Likhovtseva of Kazakhstan 6-2, 6-1, and Fernandez downed Ginger Helgeson 6-3, 6-4.

gained some confidence. Then he didn't really give me a chance because he was serving very well."

The only service break in the second set came in the final game, when Bjorkman broke at 15, Edberg double-faulting on set point.

From then on, it was all Bjorkman, finding angles and passing lanes or booming unreturnable serves.

"I was really solid in my serve and volley and never made any easy mistakes," Bjorkman said. "And in the third set, I finally got my returns going, then everything was there."

Everything except Edberg when the match ended 1 hour, 35 minutes after it started.

Sampras, seeking his third Grand Slam title of the year — his only loss was in the French Open — had a tougher time than the score might indicate. Smith, the second qualifier Sampras has played in his three matches so far, gave the world's no. 1 player problems with his slice backhand, taking all of the pace off the ball.

"When I started, I didn't have the timing," Sampras said. "I felt a bit sluggish. I managed to get through somehow. He serves pretty well, and I had a hard time with that. It was a good match to get through."

"He has a pretty good serve and he massages the ball well. He has that chip backhand that comes back



Unseeded Jonas Bjorkman of Sweden raises his arms in victory after his third round win over fifth-seeded Stefan Edberg at the U.S. Open in New York. Bjorkman won 6-4, 6-4, 6-0 (AFP photo)

low. I didn't know what was coming. It took me a while to get used to his game." Smith fought back from 5-0 in the fourth set, winning three straight games before

U.S. defender Lalas living a dream in Italy

PADUA, Italy (R) — Alexi Lalas is living out his dream of playing in the world's best soccer league — but that won't change his bohemian way of life.

"Cut my hair?" Lalas, 24, the goatee-bearded hero of the U.S. World Cup team said at a recent warm-up with Padova, the club he joined last month to become the first American to play in Italy's Serie A.

"You've got to be kidding." Clubless and unknown before the World Cup, the former high school ice hockey star from Michigan is now a world famous footballer, playing against the likes of Italy's Roberto Baggio and Dutchman Ruud Gullit.

And despite the language barrier, he's getting on well. He and his girlfriend Jill have a home in the hills around this city near Venice. He loves the pasta, weather and wine, but most of all the soccer culture.

"Italians live and breathe the game," said Lalas, tossing back the shock of ginger hair that has helped give him the most original look in soccer since Gullit first arrived with his dreadlocks.

"The fans, the press and the emotions that surrounded this game — especially Serie A — is something no American player has ever experienced," he said in an interview with Reuters.

The guitar-strumming Lalas, who cut a compact disc with his rock band the Gypsies and plans to record



Alexi Lalas

another one soon, said nothing had prepared him for stardom but vowed it would not change his ways.

"It's not that I can't pick my nose in public any more. It's that when I do, I have to do it really cool," he said.

"Some people have said, 'this is Serie A, you can't play music', but I don't see it that way. I need music in my life to do anything on the soccer field."

but never played club soccer before joining newly-promoted Padova on a one-year deal worth some \$200,000, would never make it as far as Serie A.

"Throughout my career, people have said there's no way you can play on the Olympic team, there's no way you can play on the national team, there's no way you can play in the World Cup and have success," Lalas said.

"But you know, here I am — in Italy."

Lalas, whose weakness may be a lack of speed, called it an honour to make the short-list for FIFA's World Cup all-stars team ahead of such talented defender as Brazil's Aldair and Italy's Alessandro Costacurra.

Bnt Lalas, who scoffed at the suggestion that he was one of the world's best defenders, has also proved his mettle in his first two games in Italy.

In his debut last Wednesday, an Italian Cup match won 3-0 by Internazionale, his diving header off a corner kick nearly put Padova ahead first were it not for a miraculous save by Italy goalkeeper Gianluca Pagliuca.

"Man, I thought it was in," Lalas said. "He made a sweet save, but I didn't see it — my face was in the mud."

The newspaper Gazzetta Dello Sport voted Lalas, who sent another headers just wide in the second half, his team's most valuable player for the match.

Corriere Dello Sport news-

paper, commenting on the stopper's imposing frame, said: "What striker wouldn't be just a little frightened of Lalas?"

Padova's opening match in Serie A Sunday was a baptism of fire for Lalas as Sampdoria thrashed them 5-0, but coach Mauro Sandreani said Lalas was already up to par and needed only refine his play.

"He needs to improve his coordination with the team and become a little more elegant in his moves. But his air game is a formidable offensive weapon which we plan to exploit fully," Sandreani said.

Italy coach Arrigo Sacchi has also praised Lalas, and fellow defender David Balleri said the American had a good rapport with teammates despite having to communicate in a jumble of English, Italian and Spanish.

Lalas, who studied English literature at New Jersey's Rutgers University — where he gave up a future in professional ice hockey in a gamble on soccer — said his Italian was getting better.

"My teammates have taught me all the bad words," he said. "It was a great dream to play like his idol — AC Milan and Italy defender Paolo Maldini."

"After all, it doesn't matter whether you play the guitar, what you look like or what your hair is like — if you can't do it on the field then you're no good to anybody."

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Yemeni Socialists oust old leadership, elect new bureau

SANAA (AFP) — The southern Yemen Socialist Party (YSP) elected a new politburo on Monday and turned its back on its leaders who fled abroad after the country's two-month civil war.

The new politburo was to meet again later the same day to replace the party secretary general, Ali Salem Al Beidh, who escaped to Oman just before the war ended on July 7.

Delegates said they would also draw up an outline of the party's new political programme following the south's defeat by northern troops.

The new body has kept only seven of its original 25 members, adding 14 people from the YSP central committee to the body, they said.

One of the incoming members of the trimmed-down politburo, Othman Abdul Jabbar, told AFP that the new body was the "legitimate leadership" of the party.

The election came at the end of four days of talks in the Yemeni capital where more than 200 party members pledged to support Yemen's four-year-old unity.

They rejected the secession of the south declared by Mr. Beidh on May 21, after war broke out between his forces and northern troops loyal to President Ali Abdullah Saleh on May 5.

It followed months of tension between the two leaders on how to run the country, which was created out of the merger of former Marxist South Yemen and the conservative North.

Mr. Abdul Jabbar said the 18 dropped members of the politburo who had sought refuge abroad would not be thrown out of the party. They could join the party's central committee if they returned to Yemen.

Seven of them are on a list of 16 southerners who are excluded from a general amnesty declared by Mr. Saleh at the end of the war. Mr. Saleh said the 16 should be tried as traitors and war criminals.

The president has called on the YSP several times since the end of the war to elect a new leadership excluding the "separatist" leaders as a condition for playing a role in Yemeni politics.

Abdul Jabbar said the new politburo would aim to re-launch the party and decide on whether to take part in a new government.

The YSP is still one of three parties in the ruling coalition along with Mr. Saleh's general People's Congress and the Islamic Al Islah. It has four ministers.

Most of the southern leadership fled the country when northern troops captured the southern stronghold of Aden on July 7.

Monday's hearing, only the second time Carlos had left the drab La Sante jail since his arrival in France, was to be the first detailed questioning about a car bomb blast that killed a pregnant woman and wounded 63 people outside the Paris offices of the Arab newspaper Al Watan.

At his first meeting with Mr. Bruguiere the day after his arrival in France, he was formally placed under investigation in connection with the bomb attack.

The attack coincided with the start of a trial in Paris of Carlos's girlfriend Magdalena Kopp and another urban guerrilla on arms and explosives charges and was seen as an attempt to win their release.

In a statement smuggled from La Sante prison, Carlos said he "did nothing" and "did not do anything" with the blast, and was not in Paris at the time.

Francisco Rudetski, who heads an association of victims' relatives, said there was enough evidence to bring him to trial.

The attack, in Rue Marbeuf near the Champs Elysees, is the only one for which Carlos is formally under investigation in France.

He was sentenced in absentia to life imprisonment two years ago for killing two French secret service agents in 1975.

The Paris government has blamed him for the deaths of 15 French people in France. Investigations into other attacks are being reopened and Mr. Rudetski vowed to keep up pressure to expose the full workings of Carlos's network.

"Victims have waited for 12 years," she said. "The main thing is to know the full truth on the responsibility of Carlos and of other people who were involved, without any political quarrel."

Carlos, whose real name is illich Ramirez Sanchez, won notoriety with attacks in the 1970s and 1980s, mainly in Europe and the Middle East.

France has accused him of killing 83 people, his most audacious act was to kidnap 11 ministers attending a conference in Vienna in 1975 of the organisation of petroleum exporting countries.

Recent memory. Critics said she had trouble getting along with both the opposition and members of her own socialist party.

A former European affairs minister, Ms. Cresson was named along with Breton aristocrat Yves Thibault de Silguy, 46-year-old European affairs advisor to Prime Minister Edouard Balladur. They would succeed Jacques Delors and Christiane Scrivener as representatives of France of the European Commission in January 1995.

After resigning as prime minister, Ms. Cresson, a fervent advocate of greater European integration, returned to the private sector and formed a company aimed at helping French firms compete better in the European market.

Named by President Francois Mitterrand to restore the flagging fortunes of the Socialist Party on May 15, 1991, Ms. Cresson ended her 321-day term in office in the following April as the most unpopular French premier in

Jordan moves to mend ties with Gulf

By Rana Sabbagh
Reuters

AMMAN — Jordan's ties with Gulf states, strained since the 1990 Gulf crisis, are moving on a steady course towards reconciliation, officials and diplomats said Monday.

But they ruled out any imminent breakthrough with the Kingdom's main past Arab bankrollers Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, power-brokers in the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

Riyadh and Kuwait were angered most by Jordan's perceived sympathy towards Iraq after it invaded Kuwait in August 1990.

Jordan's ties with Qatar have been fully restored while relations with Oman were unharmed by the crisis. Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) are the other two GCC mem-

bers. "Our relations with Saudi Arabia are moving in the direction of a breakthrough," a senior Jordanian official, who requested anonymity, told Reuters. "But we still need a lot of time before our relations go back to their pre-crisis status."

Jordan and Saudi Arabia have agreed to increase the number of diplomats in their respective missions to four, instead of two at present — an example cited by Jordanian officials as an indication of "new goodwill to mend fences."

Riyadh was also "looking positively" at Amman's nomination of a new ambassador to head its mission there, a post vacant since 1992 when Jordan recalled its envoy as ties worsened, he added. "We expect to hear their reply in a month," said the official.

It fired most of Jordan's diplomats a month after the Iraqi invasion, allowing only the envoy and one diplomat to stay behind. Riyadh recalled its envoy to Jordan in October 1990 and since then has only kept a charge d'affaires and another diplomat.

Jordanian officials said the Foreign Ministry has not received any formal request from Riyadh to appoint a new envoy, but Amman-based Arab diplomats have speculated as such since Jordan signed an interim peace deal with Israel in July.

A senior Jordanian diplomat visiting Kuwait this week for the first time since the Gulf crisis was warmly received despite Gulf war strains, Jordanian officials said.

Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad

Al Sabah even met Jordanian Foreign Ministry Counsellor Mashour Al Zaben.

But they said Kuwaiti officials told Mr. Zaben a strong anti-Jordanian mood prevailing among officials and ordinary Kuwaitis was blocking an improvement in ties.

They suggested that Amman make pro-Kuwaiti statements to help ease popular tensions and help the emirate determine the fate of hundreds of Kuwaitis it claims are in Iraqi jails since 1990.

But Jordan's choice of Mr. Zaben to test Kuwait's readiness to allow Jordan to reopen the embassy was in itself symbolic.

His father, a former ambassador in Kuwait, was among the few Jordanian dignitaries who publicly condemned Iraq's invasion. He inspected Jordan's

embassy in Kuwait — closed since Iraq's 1990 invasion — and paid salaries of local non-diplomatic staff.

Kuwait withdrew its ambassador from Amman but diplomatic relations were not severed. Kuwait's embassy in Amman is open and functioning under a charge d'affaires.

More than 250,000 Jordanians mostly of Palestinian origin, were forced to flee the emirate because of the war.

Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali met United Arab Emirates President Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahayan in Geneva last month, the first such high-level contact since the crisis.

The meeting was warm and cordial and could eventually lead to an exchange of official visits, officials said.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Dinar doubles in value after Iraqi-Turkish talks

ERBIL, Iraq (AFP) — The Iraqi dinar has doubled in value against the dollar on the black market in northern Iraq following hopes that talks between Iraq and Turkey could ease U.N.-imposed sanctions, Kurdish leaders said. It is now 40 dinars to the dollar, compared with 80 three weeks ago, according to the Kurdish finance "minister" Daro Nuri, who said "the dollar has not been so low since last year." The dinar started climbing amid hopes that Ankara and Baghdad could strike an agreement, traders said. The two neighbours began a new round of talks last week on flushing crude oil from a common pipeline closed since the August 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait which led to the U.N. trade and oil ban on Iraq. If the operation goes ahead 27 million barrels of crude oil will be pumped through the pipeline over six months to Turkey, allowing Iraq to receive food and medicines in return for part of the income generated. Turkey has also recently opened the Habur border crossing with Iraq, allowing small-scale trade in products not banned by the U.N. sanctions, mainly food and medicine. The U.N. Security Council is due to review the sanctions next week, also boosting the dinar amid rumours that they would be lifted, money-dealers said. If they were not ended "the dollar will rise again" but not to the same levels as previously, warned Merdiz Mohammad, a money dealer in Erbil, the central city of Iraqi Kurdistan.

Iran seizes more than a tonne of morphine

NICOSIA (R) — Iranian police seized 1,114 kg of morphine hidden in a truck in northeastern Iran, the Iranian news agency IRNA said on Monday. The morphine was found packed in small bags and hidden in various parts of the truck when police stopped it on the road from Kashmar to Neyshabur on Sunday, it said. The agency did not say if anyone was arrested.

Bavaria says no compensation for Israeli athletes

MUNICH, Germany (R) — The government of the German state of Bavaria on Monday rejected compensation claims from relatives of Israeli athletes killed in a hostage-taking at the 1972 Munich Olympic games. Members of the athletes' families are demanding damages of \$40 million from Bavaria on the basis of documents they believe show that almost all the athletes were shot dead by German police trying to free them. German authorities say they were killed by the Palestinian Black September guerrillas who seized them. Bavaria's interior ministry said in a statement that there were no indications of any "failures susceptible to legal redress" by state or local authorities.

Velayati visits Oman

MUSCAT (AFP) — Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati began an official visit to Oman on Monday, the OMA news agency said. Mr. Velayati arrived in Salalah, 1,000 kilometres south of here and was to give Sultan Qaboos a message from President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani during his stay, which was to last several days. Oman has had good relations with Tehran since the 1979 Islamic revolution, even during the Iran-Iraq war when other members of the Gulf Cooperation Council sided with Baghdad.

18 killed in Sierra Leone road crash

FREETOWN (R) — Eighteen people died in Sierra Leone when the trailer they were riding on became detached from the lorry towing it and plunged into a ravine, police said on Monday. The accident happened on Saturday on the Freetown-Bo highway in southern Sierra Leone. Seven survivors were in critical condition at Bo hospital, the police added.

Kyrgyz government resigns

RISHKEK, Kyrgyzstan (AP) — The government of Kyrgyzstan resigned Monday after 168 legislators accused their leaders of "intrigues" and forced a suspension of parliament, the ITAR-TASS news agency reported. The resignation signals the second government overhaul in less than a year in the Central Asian nation of 4 million people. Last December, President Askar Akayev fired the government amid allegations the prime minister and other top officials were embezzling Kyrgyzstan's gold reserves. Mr. Akayev issued a decree accepting the resignations and stating that a new government would serve until the next elections later this year, ITAR-TASS said. The current government will continue serving until a new cabinet is formed.

Sri Lankan president hospitalised

COLOMBO (AFP) — Sri Lankan President Dingiri Banda Wijetunga was hospitalised Monday because of high blood pressure, party and hospital sources said. Mr. Wijetunga, 78, was undergoing a series of medical checks, a hospital source told AFP. His press officer Anthony Fernando said Mr. Wijetunga was unable to address legislators of his United National Party (UNP), which lost last month's parliamentary elections, because he was feeling ill from Monday morning.

Turkey, Iran agree to cooperate on terror

ANKARA (R) — A Turkish-Iranian joint security commission on Monday signed a protocol on cooperation in the fight against terror, Anatolian news agency said. "The most important article (in the protocol) is on the subject of the mutual fight against terror," said Iranian Interior Ministry security head Gholam Huseyin Bolvadiyen. "We have agreed for both countries to trade information on this subject," he told Anatolian after two days of talks.

COLUMN

Fonda speaks out on abortion row

LUXOR (AFP) — U.S. actress and U.N. goodwill ambassador Jane Fonda added her voice to the debate over abortion here Sunday on the eve of a controversial U.N. population conference. Ms. Fonda, in Egypt for the conference, said she agreed with U.S. President Bill Clinton that abortion should be "safe, legal and rare." The Vatican and conservative Muslims have charged that the conference proposals condone abortion, as well as homosexuality and sex outside marriage. Ms. Fonda added that she and her husband Ted Turner, who owns the U.S. television channel CNN, were "concerned about the issues of population growth" and had helped to prepare the forum. The actress was guest of honour on a specially-organised trip to the southern town of Luxor, organised by Egypt to help revive tourism. She said she felt "extremely safe" on a four-hour visit to town, once the Pharaonic capital of Egypt. Egyptian ministers, South African delegates, Miss Universe and a battery of media people accompanied her on the tour. Egyptian officials hope to capitalise on the nine-day population conference to boost the ailing tourism industry, which has been hard hit by a two-year campaign of violence by Islamic militants that has killed more than 400 people. Ms. Fonda visited the pyramids of Giza earlier Sunday and described her trip as "a dream." As for Miss Universe, Sushmita Sen from India has already visited the pyramids and shrugged off a threat from the underground Jamaa Islamiyya to disrupt the conference by attacking foreigners.

Rwandan ballet to perform for 1st time since war

KIGALI (AFP) — The new Rwandan National Ballet troupe will this week perform the country's first organised cultural event since the bloody three-month civil war, officials said Monday. But Wednesday's performance of traditional Rwandan music and dance, taking place in Kigali's Franco-Rwandan Cultural Exchange Centre, will be as much an exercise in diplomacy as an artistic endeavour, with the central African nation's new government and France both hoping it will break the ice in frosty bilateral relations. Links between France and the former rebels of the Tutsi-led Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) that now holds power have been strained over Paris's traditional support for the country's Hutu majority and its policing until Aug. 22.

Alpine iceman 'was Italian'

LONDON (R) — Otzi the 5,300-year-old iceman found in an Alpine glacier three years ago was an Italian, say researchers who studied the moss he used as toilet paper. The iceman was found sticking out of the glacier by two climbers on the Ortler Alps on the Austro-Italian border. He had been freeze-dried 10,000 feet (3,000 metres) above sea level. Dr. James Dickson, of Glasgow University in Scotland, says he has solved Otzi's nationality after researching the moss found round the body. "Mosses were often used — until recently — for wiping. People would grab a clump and use it later. That is what Otzi must have done," Dr. Dickson told the Observer newspaper. "Among all the clothes and belongings that were scattered around Otzi's body were various clumps and traces of moss."

Solvent abuse is 2nd biggest U.K. adolescent killer

LONDON (R) — Solvent abuse is the second biggest killer of British adolescents after road accidents, according to a report published Monday. It kills three people every week, most of them aged between 14 and 16, and 38 per cent of those who die are first-time users, Good Housekeeping magazine said in its survey. Figures cited by the magazine showed that 13 per cent of children had tried sniffing solvents by the time they were 15.

EU grants Jordan 30

EUROPEAN UNION (R) — The European Union has granted Jordan 30 million euros (about \$40 million) to help it develop its infrastructure and economy. The grant is part of a larger package of aid that the EU has committed to providing to Jordan over the next five years. The aid is intended to help Jordan improve its roads, ports, and other infrastructure, as well as to support its economic development. The EU has been a long-time supporter of Jordan, and this grant is seen as a significant commitment to the country's future.

Vatican not sign popular Holy See baulks

VATICAN CITY (R) — The Vatican has refused to sign a declaration that would condemn the use of force in the Middle East. The declaration was part of a larger package of aid that the EU has committed to providing to Jordan over the next five years. The Vatican has been a long-time supporter of Israel, and this refusal is seen as a significant commitment to the country's future.

Sharaa tells Israel Rabin proposes withdrawal from

TEL AVIV (AP) — Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin on Tuesday proposed a three-year withdrawal from the Golan Heights, the Israeli newspaper Haaretz said. The proposal was part of a larger package of aid that the EU has committed to providing to Jordan over the next five years. The proposal is seen as a significant commitment to the country's future.

Aziz denies co

NICOSIA, Cyprus (R) — Cyprus's deputy prime minister denied reports that he had had contact with the leader of the Jewish extremist group Hamas. The denial was part of a larger package of aid that the EU has committed to providing to Jordan over the next five years. The denial is seen as a significant commitment to the country's future.